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THE
WORLD'S
ONE THOUSAND
BEST POEMS



VOLUME FOUR
DAVIS-GRIFFIN

THE
WORLD'S
ONE THOUSAND
BEST POEMS

(IN TEN VOLUMES)

BERTON BRALEY
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

VOLUME FOUR

DAVIS-GRIFFIN

(Complete Index—Volume Ten)

FUNK & WAGNALLS COMPANY
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vol. 4

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THE
WORLD'S
ONE THOUSAND
BEST POEMS



VOLUME FOUR

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

THOMAS O. DAVIS

1814—1845

THE WELCOME

COME in the evening, or come in the morning;
Come when you're look'd for, or come without
warning:

Kisses and welcome you'll find here before you,
And the oftener you come here the more I'll adore
you!

Light is my heart since the day we were plighted;
Red is my cheek that they told me was blighted;
The green of the trees looks far greener than ever,
And the linnets are singing, "True lovers don't
sever!"

I'll pull you sweet flowers, to wear if you choose
them,—

Or, after you've kiss'd them, they'll lie on my
bosom;

I'll fetch from the mountain its breeze to inspire
you;

I'll fetch from my fancy a tale that won't tire you.
Oh! your step's like the rain to the summer-vex'd
farmer,

Or sabre and shield to a knight without armor;
I'll sing you sweet songs till the stars rise above me,
Then, wandering, I'll wish you in silence to love me.

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

We'll look through the trees at the cliff and the
eyrie;

We'll tread round the rath on the track of the fairy;

We'll look on the stars, and we'll list to the river,

Till you ask of your darling what gift you can give
her:

Oh! she'll whisper you—"Love, as unchangeably
beaming,

And trust, when in secret, most tunefully streaming;

Till the starlight of heaven above us shall quiver,

As our souls flow in one down eternity's river."

So come in the evening, or come in the morning;

Come when you're looked for, or come without
warning:

Kisses and welcome you'll find here before you,

And the oftener you come here the more I'll adore
you!

Light is my heart since the day we were plighted;

Red is my cheek that they told me was blighted;

The green of the trees looks far greener than ever,

And the linnets are singing, "True lovers don't
sever!"

BARTOLOME LEONARDO DE ARGENSOLA

SPANISH

MARY MAGDALEN

BLESSED, yet sinful one, and broken-hearted!

The crowd are pointing at the thing forlorn,

In wonder and in scorn!

Thou weepest days of innocence departed;

Thou weepest, and thy tears have power to move

The Lord to pity and love.

WALTER DE LA MARE

The greatest of thy follies is forgiven,
Even for the least of all the tears that shine
On that pale cheek of thine.
Thou didst kneel down, to Him who came from
heaven,
Evil and ignorant, and thou shalt rise
Holy, and pure, and wise.

It is not much that to the fragrant blossom
The ragged brier should change, the bitter fir
Distil Arabian myrrh;
Nor that, upon the wintry desert's bosom,
The harvest should rise plenteous, and the swain
Bear home the abundant grain.

But come and see the bleak and barren mountains
Thick to their tops with roses; come and see
Leaves on the dry dead tree.
The perished plant, set out by living fountains,
Grows fruitful, and its beauteous branches rise,
Forever, toward the skies.

Translated by William Cullen Bryant

WALTER DE LA MARE

1873—

TARTARY

IF I were Lord of Tartary,
Myself and me alone,
My bed should be of ivory,
Of beaten gold my throne;
And in my court would peacocks flaunt,
And in my forests tigers haunt,

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

And in my pools great fishes slant
Their fins athwart the sun.

If I were Lord of Tartary,
Trumpeters every day
To every meal should summon me,
And in my courtyard bray;
And in the evening lamps would shine,
Yellow as honey, red as wine,
While harp and flute and mandoline,
Made music sweet and gay.

If I were Lord of Tartary,
I'd wear a robe of beads,
White and gold and green they'd be—
And clustered thick as seeds;
And ere should wane the morning-star,
I'd don my robe and scimitar,
And zebras seven should draw my car
Through Tartary's dark glades.

Lord of the fruits of Tartary,
Her rivers silver-pale!
Lord of the hills of Tartary,
Glen, thicket, wood and dale!

Her flashing stars, her scented breeze,
Her trembling lakes, like foamless seas,
Her bird-delighting citron-trees
In every purple vale!

FRANK DESPREZ

FRANK DESPREZ

LASCA

I WANT free life, and I want fresh air,
And I sigh for the canter after the cattle,
The crack of the whip like shots in a battle,
The mêlée of horns and hoofs and heads
That wars and wrangles and scatters and spreads
The green beneath and the blue above,
And dash and danger, and life and love,
And Lasca!

Lasca used to ride
On a mouse-gray mustang close to my side,
With blue serape and bright-belled spur;
I laughed with joy as I looked at her!
Little knew she of books or of creeds;
And Ave Maria sufficed her needs;
Little she cared save to be by my side,
To ride with me and ever to ride,
From San Saba's shore to Lavaca's tide.
She was as bold as the billows that beat,
She was as wild as the breezes that blow;
From her little head to her little feet
She was swayed in her suppleness to and fro
By each gust of passion; a sapling pine,
That grows on the edge of a Kansas bluff,
And wars with the wind when the weather is rough,
Is like Lasca, this love of mine.
She would hunger, that I might eat,
Would take the bitter and leave me the sweet.
But once, when I made her jealous, for fun,
At something I'd whispered or looked or done,

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

One Sunday, in San Antonio,
To a glorious girl on the Alamo,
She drew from her garter a dear little dagger,
And sting of a wasp!—it made me stagger!
An inch to the left or an inch to the right,
And I shouldn't be maundering here tonight;
But she sobbed, and, sobbing, so swiftly bound
Her torn reboso about the wound,
That I quite forgave her. Scratches don't count
In Texas, down by the Rio Grande.

Her eye was brown—a deep, deep brown;
Her hair was darker than her eye;
And something in her smile and frown,
Curled crimson lip and instep high,
Showed that there ran in each blue vein,
Mixed with the milder Aztec strain,
The vigorous vintage of old Spain.
She was alive in every limb
With feeling, to the finger tips;
And when the sun is like a fire,
And sky one shining, soft sapphire
One does not drink in little sips.

.

The air was heavy, the night was hot,
I sat by her side, and forgot—forgot;
Forgot the herd that were taking their rest,
Forgot that the air was close, opprest;
That the Texas norther comes sudden and soon,
In the dead of night or the blaze of noon;
That, once let the herd at its breath take fright,
Nothing on earth can stop the flight;

FRANK DESPREZ

And woe to the rider and woe to the steed
Who falls in front of their mad stampede!

.

Was that thunder? I grasped the cord
Of my swift mustang without a word.
I sprang to the saddle, and she clung behind,
Away! on a hot chase down the wind
But never was foxhunt half so hard,
And never was steed so little spared;
For we rode for our lives. You shall hear how we
fared,
In Texas, down by the Rio Grande.

The mustang flew, and we urged him on;
There was one chance left, and you have but one—
Halt, jump to ground and shoot your horse;
Crouch under his carcass and take your chance;
And if the steers in their frantic course
Don't batter you both to pieces at once,
You may thank your star; if not, goodbye
To the quickening kiss and the long-drawn sigh
And the open air and the open sky,
In Texas, down by the Rio Grande.

The cattle gained on us, and, just as I felt
For my old six-shooter behind in my belt,
Down came the mustang, and down came we
Clinging together, and—what was the rest?
A body that spread itself on my breast,
Two arms that shielded my dizzy head,
Two lips that hard on my lips were prest;

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

Then came thunder in my ears,
As over us surged the sea of steers,
Blows that beat blood into my eyes,
And when I could rise—
Lasca was dead!

CHARLES DIBDIN

1745—1814

TOM BOWLING

HERE, a sheer hulk, lies poor Tom Bowling,
The darling of our crew;
No more he'll hear the tempest howling,
For death has broach'd him to.
His form was of the manliest beauty,
His heart was kind and soft,
Faithful, below, he did his duty;
But now he's gone aloft.

Tom never from his word departed,
His virtues were so rare.
His friends were many and true-hearted,
His Poll was kind and fair:
And then he'd sing so blithe and jolly,
Ah, many's the time and oft!
But mirth is turned to melancholy,
For Tom is gone aloft.

Yet shall poor Tom find pleasant weather,
When He, who all commands,
Shall give, to call life's crew together,
The word to pipe all hands.

CHARLES DICKENS

Thus Death, who kings and tars despatches,
In vain Tom's life has doff'd,
For, though his body's under hatches,
His soul has gone aloft.

CHARLES DICKENS

1812—1870

THE IVY GREEN

OH, a dainty plant is the Ivy green,
That creepeth o'er ruins old!
Of right choice food are his meals I ween,
In his cell so lone and cold.
The wall must be crumbled, the stone decayed,
To pleasure his dainty whim;
And the mouldering dust that years have made
Is a merry meal for him.
Creeping where no life is seen,
A rare old plant is the Ivy green.

Fast he stealeth on, though he wears no wings,
And a staunch old heart has he.
How closely he twineth, how tight he clings
To his friend the huge Oak Tree!
And slily he traileth along the ground,
And his leaves he gently waves,
As he joyously hugs and crawleth round
The rich mould of dead men's graves.
Creeping where grim death has been,
A rare old plant is the Ivy green.

Whole ages have fled and their works decayed,
And nations have scattered been;

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

But the stout old Ivy shall never fade,
From its hale and hearty green.
The brave old plant, in its lonely days,
Shall fatten upon the past:
For the stateliest building man can raise
Is the Ivy's food at last.
Creeping on, where time has been,
A rare old plant is the Ivy green.

SYDNEY DOBELL

1824—1874

HOW'S MY BOY?

"Ho, Sailor of the sea!
How's my boy—my boy?"
"What's your boy's name, good wife,
And in what good ship sail'd he?"

"My boy John—
He that went to sea—
What care I for the ship, sailor?
My boy's my boy to me.

"You come back from sea,
And not know my John?
I might as well have ask'd some landsman
Yonder down in the town.
There's not an ass in all the parish
But he knows my John.

"How's my boy—my boy?
And unless you let me know
I'll swear you are no sailor,
Blue jacket or no,

SYDNEY DOBELL

Brass buttons or no, sailor
Anchor and crown or no!
Sure his ship was the 'Jolly Briton'—
"Speak low, woman, speak low!"
"And why should I speak low, sailor,
About my own boy John?
If I was loud as I am proud
I'd sing him over the town!
Why should I speak low, sailor?"
"That good ship went down."

"How's my boy—my boy?
What care I for the ship, sailor?
I was never aboard her.
Be she afloat or be she aground,
Sinking or swimming, I'll be bound,
Her owners can afford her!
I say, how's my John?"
"Every man on board went down,
Every man aboard her."
"How's my boy—my boy?
What care I for the men, sailor?
I'm not their mother—
How's my boy—my boy?
Tell me of him and no other!
How's my boy—my boy?"

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

AUSTIN DOBSON

1840—1921

A DEAD LETTER

I

I DREW it from its china tomb;—
It came out feebly scented
With some thin ghost of past perfume
That dust and days had lent it.

An old, old letter,—folded still!
To read with due composure,
I sought the sun-lit window-sill,
Above the grey enclosure,

That glimmering in the sultry haze,
Faint-flowered, dimly shaded,
Slumbered like Goldsmith's Madam Blaize,
Bedizened and brocaded.

A queer old place! You'd surely say
Some tea-bored garden-maker
Had planned it in Dutch William's day
To please some florist Quaker,

So trim it was. The yew-trees still,
With pious care perverted,
Grew in the same grim shapes; and still
The lipless dolphin spurted;

Still in his wonted state abode
The broken-nosed Apollo;
And still the cypress-arbour showed
The same umbrageous hollow.

AUSTIN DOBSON

Only,—as fresh young Beauty gleams
From coffee-coloured laces,—
So peeped from its old-fashioned dreams
The fresher modern traces;

For idle mallet, hoop, and ball
Upon the lawn were lying;
A magazine, a tumbled shawl.
Round which the swifts were flying;

And, tossed beside the Guelder rose,
A heap of rainbow knitting,
Where, blinking in her pleased repose,
A persian cat was sitting.

'A place to love in,—live,—for aye,
If we too, like Tithonus,
Could find some god to stretch the grey,
Scant life the Fates have thrown us;

'But now by steam we run our race,
With buttoned heart and pocket;
Our Love's a gilded, surplus grace,—
Just like an empty locket!

'“The time is out of joint.” Who will
May strive to make it better;
For me, this warm old window-sill,
And this old dusty letter.'

II

'Dear *John* (the letter ran), it can't, can't be,
For Father's gone to *Chorley Fair* with *Sam*,
And Mother's storing Apples,—*Prue* and *Me*
Up to our Elbows making *Damson Jam*:

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

But we shall meet before a Week is gone,—
“ ’Tis a long Lane that has no turning,” *John!*

‘Only till Sunday next, and then you’ll wait
Behind the White-Thorn, by the broken Stile—
We can go round and catch them at the Gate,
All to Ourselves, for nearly one long Mile;
Dear *Prue* won’t look, and Father he’ll go on,
And *Sam*’s two Eyes are all for *Cissy*, *John!*

‘*John*, she’s so smart,—with every Ribbon new,
Flame-coloured Sack, and Crimson Padesoy:
As proud as proud; and has the Vapours too,
Just like My Lady;—calls poor *Sam* a Boy,
And vows no Sweetheart’s worth the Thinking-on
Till he’s past Thirty . . . I know better, *John!*

‘My Dear, I don’t think that I thought of much
Before we knew each other, I and you;
And now, why, *John*, your least, least Finger-touch,
Gives me enough to think a Summer through.
See, for I send you Something! There, ’tis gone!
Look in this corner,—mind you find it, *John!*’

III

This was the matter of the note,—
A long-forgot deposit,
Dropped in an Indian dragon’s throat,
Deep in a fragrant closet,

Piled with a dapper Dresden world,—
Beaux, beauties, prayers, and poses,—
Bonzes with squat legs undercurled,
And great jars filled with roses.

AUSTIN DOBSON

Ah, heart that wrote! Ah, lips that kissed!

You had no thought or presage
Into what keeping you dismissed
Your simple old-world message!

A reverent one. Though we to-day
Distrust beliefs and powers,
The artless, ageless things you say
Are fresh as May's own flowers,

Starring some pure primaeval spring,
Ere Gold had grown despotic,—
Ere Life was yet a selfish thing.
Or Love a mere exotic!

I need not search too much to find
Whose lot it was to send it,
That feel upon me yet the kind
Soft hand of her who penned it;

And see, through two score years of smoke,
In by-gone, quaint apparel,
Shine from yon time-black Norway oak
The face of Patience Caryl,—

The pale, smooth forehead, silver-tressed;
The grey gown, primly flowered;
The spotless, stately coif whose crest
Like Hector's horse-plume towered;

And still the sweet half-solemn look
Where some past thought was clinging,
As when one shuts a serious book
To hear the thrushes singing.

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

I kneel to you! Of those you were,
Whose kind old hearts grow mellow,—
Whose fair old faces grow more fair
As Point and Flanders yellow;

Whom some old store of garnered grief,
Their placid temples shading,
Crowns like a wreath of autumn leaf
With tender tints of fading.

Peace to your soul! You died unwed—
Despite this loving letter.
And what of John? The less that's said
Of John, I think, the better.

THE POMPADOUR'S FAN

CHICKEN-SKIN, delicate, white,
Painted by Carlo Vanloo,
Loves in a riot of light,
Roses and vaporous blue;
Hark to the dainty *frou-frou*!
Picture above, if you can,
Eyes that could melt as the dew,—
This was the Pompadour's fan!

See how they rise at the sight,
Thronging the *Œil de Bœuf* through,
Courtiers as butterflies bright,
Beauties that Fragonard drew,
Talon-rouge, *falbala*, queue,
Cardinal, Duke,—to a man,
Eager to sigh or to sue,—
This was the Pompadour's fan!

AUSTIN DOBSON

Ah, but things more than polite
Hung on this toy, *voyez-vous!*
Matters of state and of might,
Things that great ministers do;
Things that, maybe, overthrew
Those in whose brains they began;
Here was the sign and the cue,—
This was the Pompadour's fan!

ENVOY

Where are the secrets it knew?
Weavings of plot and of plan?
—But where is the Pompadour, too?
This was the Pompadour's Fan!

THE BALLAD OF 'BEAU BROCADE'

SEVENTEEN hundred and thirty-nine:—
That was the date of this tale of mine.

First great GEORGE was buried and gone;
GEORGE the Second was plodding on.

LONDON then, as the 'Guides' aver,
Shared its glories with *Westminster*;

And people of rank, to correct their 'tone',
Went out of town to *Marybone*.

Those were the days of the War with *Spain*,
PORTO-BELLO would soon be ta'en;

WHITEFIELD preached to the colliers grim,
Bishops in lawn sleeves preached at him;

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

WALPOLE talked of 'a man and his price';
Nobody's virtue was over-nice:—

Those, in fine, were the brave days when
Coaches were stopped by . . *Highwaymen!*

And of all the knights of the gentle trade
Nobody bolder than 'BEAU BROCADE'.

This they knew on the whole way down;
Best,—maybe,—at the '*Oak and Crown*'.

(For timorous cits on their pilgrimage
Would 'club' for a 'Guard' to ride the stage:

And the Guard that rode on more than one
Was the Host of this hostel's sister's son.)

Open we here on a March day fine,
Under the oak with the hanging sign.

There was Barber DICK with his basin by;
Cobbler JOE with the patch on his eye;

Portly product of Beef and Beer,
JOHN the host, he was standing near.

Straining and creaking, with wheels awry,
Lumbering came the '*Plymouth Fly*';—

Lumbering up from *Bagshot Heath*,
Guard in the basket armed to the teeth;

AUSTIN DOBSON

Passengers heavily armed inside;
Not the less surely the coach had been tried!

Tried!—but a couple of miles away,
By a well-dressed man!—in the open day!

Tried successfully, never a doubt,—
Pockets of passengers all turned out!

Cloak-bags rifled, and cushions ripped,—
Even an Ensign's wallet stripped!

Even a Methodist hosier's wife
Offered the choice of her Money or Life!

Highwayman's manners no less polite,
Hoped that their coppers (returned) were right;

Sorry to find the company poor,
Hoped next time they'd travel with more;—

Plucked them all at his ease, in short:—
Such was the '*Plymouth Fly's*' report.

Sympathy! horror! and wonderment!
'Catch the Villain!' (But Nobody went.)

Hosier's wife led into the Bar;
(That's where the best strong waters are!)

Followed the tale of the hundred-and-one
Things that Somebody ought to have done.

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

Ensign (of BRAGG's) made a terrible clangour:
But for the Ladies had drawn his hanger!

Robber, of course, was 'BEAU BROCADE,'
Out-spoke DOLLY the Chambermaid.

Devonshire DOLLY, plump and red,
Spoke from the gallery overhead;—

Spoke it out boldly, staring hard:—
'Why didn't you shoot then, GEORGE the Guard?'

Spoke it out bolder, seeing him mute:—
'GEORGE the Guard, why didn't you shoot?'

Portly JOHN grew pale and red,
(JOHN was afraid of her, people said;)

Gasped that 'DOLLY was surely cracked,'
(JOHN was afraid of her—that's a fact!)

GEORGE the Guard grew red and pale,
Slowly finished his quart of ale:—

'Shoot?' Why—Rabbit him!—didn't he shoot?'
Muttered—'The Baggage was far too 'cute!'

'Shoot?' Why he'd flashed the pan in his eye!
Muttered—'She'd pay for it by and by!'
Further than this made no reply.

Nor could a further reply be made,
For GEORGE was in league with 'BEAU BROCADE'!

AUSTIN DOBSON

And JOHN the Host, in his wakefullest state,
Was not—on the whole—immaculate.

But nobody's virtue was over-nice
When WALPOLE talked of 'a man and his price';

And wherever Purity found abode,
'Twas certainly *not* on a posting road.

II

'Forty' followed to 'Thirty-nine.'
Glorious days of the *Hanover* line!

Princes were born, and drums were banged;
Now and then batches of Highwaymen hanged.

'Glorious news!'—from the *Spanish Main*;
PORTO-BELLO at last was ta'en.

'Glorious news!'—for the liquor trade;
Nobody dreamed of 'BEAU BROCADE.'

People were thinking of *Spanish Crowns*;
Money was coming from seaport towns!

Nobody dreamed of 'BEAU BROCADE,'
(Only DOLLY the Chambermaid!)

Blessings on VERNON! Fill up the cans;
Money was coming in 'Flys' and 'Vans.'

Possibly JOHN the Host had heard;
Also, certainly, GEORGE the Guard.

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

And DOLLY had possibly tidings, too,
That made her rise from her bed anew,

Plump as ever, but stern of eye,
With a fixed intention to warn the 'Fly.'

Lingering only at JOHN his door,
Just to make sure of a jerky snore;

Saddling the grey mare, *Dumpling Star*;
Fetching the pistol out of the bar;

(The old horse-pistol that, they say,
Came from the battle of Malplaquet;)

Loading with powder that maids would use,
Even in 'Forty,' to clear the flues;

And a couple of silver buttons, the Squire
Gave her, away in *Devonshire*.

These she wadded—for want of better—
With the B—SH—P of L—ND—N's 'Pastoral Letter';

Looked to the flint, and hung the whole,
Ready to use, at her pocket-hole.

Thus equipped and accoutred, DOLLY
Clattered away to 'Exciseman's Folly';—

Such was the name of a ruined abode,
Just on the edge of the *London* road.

AUSTIN DOBSON

Thence she thought she might safely try,
As soon as she saw it, to warn the 'Fly.'

But, as chance fell out, her rein she drew,
As the BEAU came cantering into the view.

By the light of the moon she could see him drest
In his famous gold-sprigged tambour vest;

And under his silver-grey surtout,
The laced, historical coat of blue,

That he wore when he went to *London-Spaw*,
And robbed Sir MUNGO MUCKLETHRAW.

Out-spoke DOLLY the Chambermaid,
(Trembling a little, but not afraid,)
'Stand and Deliver, O "BEAU BROCADE"!'—

But the BEAU rode nearer, and would not speak,
For he saw by the moonlight a rosy cheek;

And a spavined mare with a rusty hide;
And a girl with her hand at her pocket-side.

So never a word he spoke as yet,
For he thought 'twas a freak, of MEG or BET;—
A freak of the 'Rose' or the 'Rummer' set.

Out-spoke DOLLY the Chambermaid,
(Tremulous now, and sore afraid,)
'Stand and Deliver, O "BEAU BROCADE"!'—

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

Firing then, out of sheer alarm,
Hit the BEAU in the Bridle-arm.

Button the first went none knows where,
But it carried away his *solitaire*;

Button the second a circuit made,
Glanced in under the shoulder-blade;—
Down from the saddle fell 'BEAU BROCADE'!

Down from the saddle and never stirred!—
DOLLY grew white as a Windsor curd.

Slipped not less from the mare, and bound
Strips of her kirtle about his wound.

Then, lest his Worship should rise and flee,
Fettered his ankles—tenderly.

Jumped on his chestnut, BET the fleet
(Called after BET of *Portugal Street*);

Came like the wind to the old Inn-door;—
Roused fat JOHN from a three-fold snore;—

Vowed she'd 'peach if he misbehaved . . .
Briefly, the '*Plymouth Fly*' was saved!

Staines and *Windsor* were all on fire:—
DOLLY was wed to a *Yorkshire* squire;
Went to Town at the K—G's desire!

But whether His M—J—STY saw her or not,
HOGARTH jotted her down on the spot;

AUSTIN DOBSON

And something of DOLLY one still may trace
In the fresh contours of his '*Milkmaid's*' face.

GEORGE the Guard fled over the sea:
JOHN had a fit—of perplexity;

Turned King's evidence, sad to state;—
But JOHN was never immaculate.

As for the BEAU, he was duly tried,
When his wound was healed, at *Whitsuntide*;

Served—for a day—as the last of 'sights,'
To the world of *St. James's-Street* and '*White's*,'

Went on his way to TYBURN TREE,
With a pomp befitting his high degree.

Every privilege rank confers:—
Bouquet of pinks at *St. Sepulcher's*;

Flagon of ale at *Holburn Bar*;
Friends (in mourning) to follow his Car—
(*'t'* is omitted where HEROES are!)

Every one knows the speech he made;
Swore that he 'rather admired the Jade!'—

Waved to the crowd with his gold-laced hat:
Talked to the Chaplain after that;

Turned to the Topsman undismayed . . .
This was the finish of '*BEAU BROCADE*'!

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

*And this is the Ballad that seemed to hide
In the leaves of a dusty 'LONDONER'S GUIDE';*

*'Humbly Inscrib'd (with curls and tails)
By the Author to FREDERICK, Prince of WALES:—*

*'Published by FRANCIS and OLIVER PINE;
Ludgate-Hill, at the Blackmoor Sign,
Seventeen-Hundred-and-Thirty-Nine.'*

THE BALLAD OF PROSE AND RHYME

WHEN the ways are heavy with mire and rut,
In November fogs, in December snows,
When the North Wind howls, and the doors are
shut,—

There is place and enough for the pains of prose;
But whenever a scent from the whitethorn
blows,

And the jasmine-stars at the casement climb,
And a Rosalind-face at the lattice shows,
Then hey!—for the ripple of laughing rhyme!

When the brain gets dry as an empty nut,
When the reason stands on its squarest toes,
When the mind (like a beard) has a 'formal cut,'—
There is place and enough for the pains of
prose;

But whenever the May-blood stirs and glows,
And the young year draws to the 'golden prime,'
And Sir Romeo sticks in his ear a rose,—
Then hey!—for the ripple of laughing rhyme!

AUSTIN DOBSON

In a theme where the thoughts have a pedant-strut,
In a changing quarrel of 'Ayes' and 'Noes,'
In a starched procession of 'If' and 'But,'—
There is place and enough for the pains of
prose;
But whenever a soft glance softer grows
And the light hours dance to the trysting-time,
And the secret is told 'that no one knows,'—
Then hey!—for the ripple of laughing rhyme!

ENVOY

In the work-a-day world,—or its needs and woes,
There is place and enough for the pains of prose;
But whenever the May-bells clash and chime,
Then hey!—for the ripple of laughing rhyme!

THE LADIES OF ST. JAMES'S

"Phyllida amo ante alias."—VIRG.

THE ladies of St. James's
Go swinging to the play;
Their footmen run before them,
With a 'Stand by! Clear the way!'
But Phyllida, my Phyllida!
She takes her buckled shoon,
When we go out a-courting
Beneath the harvest moon.

The ladies of St. James's
Wear satin on their backs;
They sit all night at *Ombre*,
With candles all of wax:

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

But Phyllida, my Phyllida!

She dons her russet gown,
And hastes to gather May dew
Before the world is down.

The ladies of St. James's!

They are so fine and fair,
You'd think a box of essences
Was broken in the air:
But Phyllida, my Phyllida!
The breath of heath and furze,
When breezes blow at morning,
Is not so fresh as hers.

The ladies of St. James's!

They're painted to the eyes,
Their white it stays for ever,
Their red it never dies:
But Phyllida, my Phyllida!
Her colour comes and goes;
It trembles to a lily,—
It wavers to a rose.

The ladies of St. James's!

You scarce can understand
The half of all their speeches,
Their phrases are so grand:
But Phyllida, my Phyllida!
Her shy and simple words
Are clear as after rain-drops
The music of the birds.

The ladies of St. James's!

They have their fits and freaks;

AUSTIN DOBSON

They smile on you—for seconds;
They frown on you—for weeks:
But Phyllida, my Phyllida!
Come either storm or shine,
From Shrove-tide unto Shrove-tide,
Is always true—and mine.

My Phyllida! my Phyllida!
I care not though they heap
The hearts of all St. James's,
And give me all to keep;
I care not whose the beauties
Of all the world may be,
For Phyllida—my Phyllida
Is all the world to me!

TO A GREEK GIRL

WITH breath of thyme and bees that hum,
Across the years you seem to come,—
Across the years with nymph-like head,
And wind-blown brows unfilleted;
A girlish shape that slips the bud
In lines of unspoiled symmetry;
A girlish shape that stirs the blood
With pulse of Spring, Autonoë!

Where'er you pass,—where'er you go,
I hear the pebbly rillet flow;
Where'er you go,—where'er you pass,
There comes a gladness on the grass
You bring blithe airs where'er you tread,—
Blithe airs that blow from down and sea
You wake in me a Pan not dead,—
Not wholly dead!—Autonoë!

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

How sweet with you on some green sod
To wreath the rustic garden-god;
How sweet beneath the chestnut's shade
With you to weave a basket-braid;
To watch across the stricken chords
Your rosy-twinkling fingers flee;
To woo you in soft woodland words,
With woodland pipe, Autonoë!

In vain,—in vain! The years divide:
Where Thamis rolls a murky tide,
I sit and fill my painful reams,
And see you only in my dreams;—
A vision, like Alcestis, brought
From under-lands of Memory,—
A dream of Form in days of Thought,—
A dream,—a dream, Autonoë!

MARY MAPES DODGE

1838—1905

THE MINUET

GRANDMA told me all about it,
Told me so I couldn't doubt it,
How she danced, my grandma danced; long ago—
How she held her pretty head,
How her dainty skirt she spread,
How she slowly leaned and rose—long ago.

Grandma's hair was bright and sunny,
Dimpled cheeks, too, oh, how funny!
Really quite a pretty girl—long ago.

ALFRED DOMETT

Bless her! why, she wears a cap,
Grandma does, and takes a nap
Every single day: and yet
Grandma danced the minuet—long ago.

"Modern ways are quite alarming,"
Grandma says, "but boys were charming"
(Girls and boys she means, of course) "long ago."
Brave but modest, grandly shy;
She would like to have us try
Just to feel like those who met
In the graceful minuet—long ago.

ALFRED DOMETT

1811—1887

A CHRISTMAS HYMN

It was the calm and silent night!—
Seven hundred years and fifty three
Had Rome been growing up to might,
And now was Queen of land and sea!
No sound was heard of clashing wars;
Peace brooded o'er the hush'd domain;
Apollo, Pallas, Jove and Mars
Held undisturb'd their ancient reign,
In the solemn midnight,
Centuries ago!

'Twas in the calm and silent night!
The senator of haughty Rome
Impatient urged his chariot's flight
From lordly revel rolling home.
Triumphal arches gleaming swell
His breast with thought of boundless sway.

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

What reck'd the Roman what befell
A paltry province far away,
In the solemn midnight,
Centuries ago?

Within that province far away
Went plodding home a weary boor:
A streak of light before him lay,
Fall'n thro' a half-shut stable door
Across his path. He pass'd—for naught
Told what was going on within:
How keen the stars! his only thought;
The air how cold and calm and thin,
In the solemn midnight
Centuries ago!

O strange indifference!—low and high
Drowns over common joys and cares:
The earth was still—but knew not why;
The world was listening—unawares;
How calm a moment may precede
One that shall thrill the world for ever!
To that still moment none would heed
Man's doom was link'd, no more to sever,
In the solemn midnight
Centuries ago.

It is the calm and solemn night!
A thousand bells ring out and throw
Their joyous peals abroad, and smite
The darkness, charm'd and holy now!
The night that erst no name had worn,
To it a happy name is given;

JOHN DONNE

For in that stable lay new-born
The peaceful Prince of Earth and Heaven,
In the solemn midnight
Centuries ago.

JOHN DONNE

1573—1631

PRESENT IN ABSENCE

ABSENCE, hear thou this protestation
Against thy strength,
Distance, and length;
Do what thou canst for alteration:
For hearts of truest mettle
Absence doth join; and Time doth settle.

WHO loves a mistress of such quality,
His mind hath found
Affection's ground
Beyond time, place, and mortality.
To hearts that cannot vary
Absence is present, Time doth tarry.

By absence this good means I gain,
That I can catch her,
Where none can match her,
In some close corner of my brain:
There I embrace and kiss her;
And so I both enjoy and miss her.

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

SARAH DOUDNEY

THE LESSON OF THE WATER-MILL

LISTEN to the water-mill;
Through the livelong day,
How the clicking of its wheel
Wears the hours away!
Languidly the autumn wind,
Stirs the forest leaves,
From the field the reapers sing,
Binding up their sheaves;
And a proverb haunts my mind
As a spell is cast—
"The mill cannot grind
With the water that is past."

Autumn winds revive no more
Leaves that once are shed,
And the sickle cannot reap
Corn once gatherèd;
Flows the ruffled streamlet on,
Tranquil, deep, and still;
Never gliding back again
To the water-mill;
Truly speaks the proverb old
With a meaning vast—
"The mill cannot grind
With the water that is past."

Take the lesson to thyself,
True and loving heart;
Golden youth is fleeting by,
Summer hours depart;

SARAH DOUDNEY

Learn to make the most of life,
Lose no happy day;
Time will never bring thee back
Chances swept away!
Leave no tender word unsaid,
Love while love shall last—
"The mill cannot grind
With the water that is past."

Work while yet the daylight shines,
Man of strength and will!
Never does the streamlet glide
Useless by the mill;
Wait not till to-morrow's sun
Beams upon thy way,
All that thou canst call thine own
Lies in thy "To-day";
Power, intellect and health
May not always last—
"The mill cannot grind
With the water that is past."

Oh, the wasted hours of life
That have drifted by!
Oh, the good that might have been—
Lost, without a sigh!
Love that we might once have saved
By a single word,
Thoughts conceived, but never penned,
Perishing unheard;—
Take the proverb to thine heart,
Take, and hold it fast—
"The mill cannot grind
With the water that is past."

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

BARTHOLOMEW DOWLING

1820—

THE REVEL

EAST INDIA

WE meet 'neath the sounding rafter,
And the walls around are bare;
As they shout back our peals of laughter
It seems that the dead are there.
Then stand to your glasses, steady!
We drink in our comrades' eyes:
One cup to the dead already—
Hurrah for the next that dies!

Not here are the goblets glowing,
Not here is the vintage sweet;
'T is cold, as our hearts are growing,
And dark as the doom we meet.
But stand to your glasses, steady!
And soon shall our pulses rise:
A cup to the dead already—
Hurrah for the next that dies!

There's many a hand that's shaking,
And many a cheek that's sunk;
But soon, though our hearts are breaking,
They'll burn with the wine we've drunk.
Then stand to your glasses, steady!
'T is here the revival lies:
Quaff a cup to the dead already—
Hurrah for the next that dies!

BARTHOLOMEW DOWLING

Time was when we laugh'd at others;
We thought we were wiser then;
Ha! ha! let them think of their mothers,
Who hope to see them again.

No! stand to your glasses, steady!
The thoughtless is here the wise:
One cup to the dead already—
Hurrah for the next that dies!

Not a sigh for the lot that darkles,
Not a tear for the friends that sink;
We'll fall, 'midst the wine-cup's sparkles,
As mute as the wine we drink.

Come stand to your glasses, steady!
'T is this that the respite buys:
A cup to the dead already—
Hurrah for the next that dies!

There's a mist on the glass congealing,
'T is the hurricane's sultry breath;
And thus does the warmth of feeling
Turn ice in the grasp of Death.

But stand to your glasses, steady!
For a moment the vapor flies:
Quaff a cup to the dead already—
Hurrah for the next that dies!

Who dreads to the dust returning?
Who shrinks from the sable shore,
Where the high and haughty yearning
Of the soul can sting no more?

No, stand to your glasses, steady!
The world is a world of lies:
A cup to the dead already—
And hurrah for the next that dies!

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

Cut off from the land that bore us,
Betray'd by the land we find,
When the brightest have gone before us,
And the dullest are most behind—
Stand, stand to your glasses, steady!
'T is all we have left to prize:
One cup to the dead already—
Hurrah for the next that dies!

ERNEST DOWSON

1867—1900

CYNARA

LAST night, ah, yesternight, betwixt her lips and mine
There fell thy shadow, Cynara! thy breath was shed
Upon my soul between the kisses and the wine;
And I was desolate and sick of an old passion,
Yea, I was desolate and bow'd my head:
I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my fashion.

All night upon mine heart I felt her warm heart beat,
Night-long within mine arms in love and sleep she
lay;
Surely the kisses of her bought red mouth were
sweet;
But I was desolate and sick of an old passion,
When I awoke and found the dawn was gray:
I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my fashion.

I have forgot much, Cynara! gone with the wind,
Flung roses, roses, riotously with the throng,
Dancing, to put thy pale lost lilies out of mind;

JOSEPH RODMAN DRAKE

But I was desolate and sick of an old passion,
Yea, all the time, because the dance was long:
I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my fashion.

I cried for madder music and for stronger wine,
But when the feast is finish'd and the lamps expire,
Then falls the shadow, Cynara! the night is thine;
And I am desolate and sick of an old passion,
Yea, hungry for the lips of my desire:
I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my fashion.

JOSEPH RODMAN DRAKE

1795—1820

THE AMERICAN FLAG

WHEN Freedom, from her mountain height,
Unfurled her standard to the air,
She tore the azure robe of night,
And set the stars of glory there!
She mingled with its gorgeous dyes
The milky baldric of the skies,
And striped its pure, celestial white
With streakings of the morning light;
Then, from his mansion in the sun,
She called her eagle-bearer down,
And gave into his mighty hand
The symbol of her chosen land!

Majestic monarch of the cloud!
Who rear'st aloft thy regal form,
To hear the tempest trumping loud,
And see the lightning lances driven,

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

When strive the warriors of the storm,
And rolls the thunder-drum of heaven—
Child of the Sun! to thee 'tis given
To guard the banner of the free,
To hover in the sulphur smoke,
To ward away the battle-stroke,
And bid its blendings shine afar,
Like rainbows on the cloud of war,
The harbingers of victory!

Flag of the brave! thy folds shall fly,
The sign of hope and triumph high!
When speaks the signal-trumpet tone,
And the long line comes gleaming on,
Ere yet the life-blood, warm and wet,
Has dimmed the glistening bayonet,
Each soldier's eyes shall brightly turn
To where thy sky-born glories burn,
And, as his springing steps advance,
Catch war and vengeance from the glance.

And when the cannon-mouthings loud
Heave in wild wreaths the battle shroud,
And gory sabers rise and fall
Like shoots of flame on midnight's pall,
Then shall thy meteor glances glow,
And cowering foes shall shrink beneath
Each gallant arm that strikes below
That lovely messenger of death.

Flag of the seas! on ocean wave
Thy stars shall glitter o'er the brave;
When death, careering on the gale,
Sweeps darkly round the bellied sail,

MICHAEL DRAYTON

And frightened waves rush wildly back
Before the broadsides reeling rack,
Each dying wanderer of the sea
Shall look at once to heaven and thee,
And smile to see thy splendors fly
In triumph o'er his closing eye.

Flag of the free heart's hope and home,
By angel hands to valor given!
Thy stars have lit the welkin dome,
And all thy hues were born in heaven.
Forever float that standard sheet!

Where breathes the foe but falls before us,
With Freedom's soil beneath our feet,
And Freedom's banner streaming o'er us?

MICHAEL DRAYTON

1563—1631

THE PARTING

SINCE there's no help, come let us kiss and part—
Nay, I have done, you get no more of me;
And I am glad, yea, glad with all my heart,
That thus so cleanly I myself can free.
Shake hands for ever, cancel all our vows,
And when we meet at any time again,
Be it not seen in either of our brows
That we one jot of former love retain.
Now at the last gasp of Love's latest breath,
When, his pulse failing, Passion speechless lies,
When Faith is kneeling by his bed of death,
And Innocence is closing up his eyes—
Now if thus wouldst, when all have given him over,
From death to life thou might'st him yet recover.

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

JOHN DRINKWATER

1882—

A PRAYER

GRANT us the will to fashion as we feel,
Grant us the strength to labor as we know;
Grant us the purpose, ribbed and edged with steel,
To strike the blow.

Knowledge we ask not—knowledge Thou has lent:
But, Lord, the will—there lies our bitter need.
Give us to build above the deep intent
The deed, the deed!

WILLIAM HENRY DRUMMOND

1854—1907

WRECK OF THE "JULIE PLANTE"

ON wan dark night on Lac St. Pierre,
De win' she blow, blow, blow,
An' de crew of de wood scow "Julie Plante"
Got scar't an' run below;
For de win' she blow lak hurricane,
Bimeby she blow some more,
An' de scow bus' up on Lac St. Pierre,
Wan arpent from de shore.

De Captinne walk on de fronte deck,
An' walk de hin' deck, too—
He call de crew from up de hole
He call de cook also.

WILLIAM HENRY DRUMMOND

De cook she's name was Rosie,
She come from Montreal,
Was chambre maid on lumber barge,
On de Grande Lachine Canal.

De win' she blow from nor'—eas'—wes'—
De sout' win' she blow, too,
W'en Rosie cry "Mon cher Captinne,
Mon cher, w'at I shall do?"
Den de Captinne t'row de big ankerre,
But still de scow she dreef,
De crew he can't pass on de shore,
Becos' he los' hees skeef.

De night was dark, lak' one black cat,
De wave run high an' fas',
W'en de Captinne tak' de Rosie girl
An' tie her to de mas'.
Den he also tak' de life preserve,
An' jomp off on de lak',
An' say, "Good by, ma Rosie dear,
I go drown for your sak'."

Nex' morning very early,
'Bout ha'f-pas' two—three—four—
De Captinne, scow, an' de poor Rosie
Was corpses on de shore;
For he win' she blow lak' hurricane
Bimeby she blow some more,
An' de scow bus' up on Lac. St. Pierre,
Wan arpent from de shore.

MORAL

Now, all good wood scow sailor man
Tak' warning by dat storm,

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

An' go an' marry some nice French girl
An' leev on wan beeg farm;

De win' can blow lak' hurricane,
An' s'pose she blow some more,
You can't get drown on Lac St. Pierre,
So long you stay on shore.

JOHN DRYDEN

1631—1700

ALEXANDER'S FEAST, OR, THE POWER OF MUSIC

'Twas at the royal feast for Persia won
By Philip's warlike son—
Aloft in awful state
The godlike hero sate
On his imperial throne;
His valiant peers were placed around,
Their brows with roses and with myrtles bound,
(So should desert in arms be crown'd);
The lovely Thais by his side
Sate like a blooming Eastern bride
In flower of youth and beauty's pride:—
Happy, happy, happy pair!
None but the brave
None but the brave
None but the brave deserves the fair!

Timotheus placed on high
Amid the tuneful quire
With flying fingers touch'd the lyre:
The trembling notes ascend the sky
And heavenly joys inspire.

JOHN DRYDEN

The song began from Jove
Who left his blissful seats above—
Such is the power of mighty love!
A dragon's fiery form belied the god;
Sublime on radiant spires he rode
When he to fair Olympia prest,
And while he sought her snowy breast,
Then round her slender waist he curl'd,
And stamp'd an image of himself, a sovereign of the
world.

—The listening crowd admire the lofty sound;
A present deity! they shout around:
A present deity! the vaulted roofs rebound:
With ravish'd ears
The monarch hears,
Assumes the god;
Affects to nod
And seems to shake the spheres.

The praise of Bacchus then the sweet musician
sung,
Of Bacchus ever fair and ever young:
The jolly god in triumph comes;
Sound the trumpets, beat the drums!
Flush'd with a purple grace
He shows his honest face:
Now gives the hautboys breath; he comes, he
comes!
Bacchus, ever fair and young,
Drinking joys did first ordain;
Bacchus' blessings are a treasure,
Drinking is the soldier's pleasure:
Rich the treasure,

Sweet the pleasure,
Sweet is pleasure after pain.

Soothed with the sound, the king grew vain;
Fought all his battles o'er again,
And thrice he routed all his foes, and thrice he slew
the slain!

The master saw the madness rise,
His glowing cheeks, his ardent eyes;
And while he Heaven and Earth defied
Changed his hand and check'd his pride.
He chose a mournful Muse
Soft pity to infuse:
He sung Darius great and good,
By too severe a fate
Fallen, fallen, fallen, fallen,
Fallen from his high estate.
And weltering in his blood;
Deserted at his utmost need
By those his former bounty fed;
On the bare earth exposed he lies
With not a friend to close his eyes.
—With downcast looks the joyless victor sate,
Revolving in his alter'd soul
The various turns of Chance below;
And now and then a sigh he stole,
And tears began to flow.

The mighty master smiled to see
That love was in the next degree;
'Twas but a kindred-sound to move,
For pity melts the mind to love.

JOHN DRYDEN

Softly sweet, in Lydian measures
Soon he soothed his soul to pleasures.
War, he sung, is toil and trouble,
Honour but an empty bubble;
Never ending, still beginning,
Fighting still, and still destroying;
If the world be worth thy winning,
Think, O think, it worth enjoying:
Lovely Thais sits beside thee,
Take the good the gods provide thee!
—The many rend the skies with loud applause;
So Love was crown'd, but Music won the cause.
The prince, unable to conceal his pain,
Gazed on the fair
Who caused his care,
And sigh'd and look'd, sigh'd and look'd,
Sigh'd and look'd, and sigh'd again:
At length with love and wine at once oppress
The vanquish'd victor sunk upon her breast.

Now strike the golden lyre again:
A louder yet, and yet a louder strain!
Break his bands of sleep asunder
And rouse him like a rattling peal of thunder.
Hark, hark! the horrid sound
Has raised up his head:
As awaked from the dead
And amazed he stares around.
Revenge, revenge, Timotheus cries,
See the Furies arise!
See the snakes that they rear
How they hiss in their hair,
And the sparkles that flash from their eyes!

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

Behold a ghastly band,
Each a torch in his hand!
Those are Grecian ghosts, that in battle were slain
And unburied remain
Inglorious on the plain:
Give the vengeance due
To the valiant crew!
Behold how they toss their torches on high,
How they point to the Persian abodes
And glittering temples of their hostile gods.
—The princes applaud with a furious joy:
And the King seized a flambeau with zeal to destroy,
Thais led the way
To light him to his prey,
And like another Helen, fired another Troy!

—Thus, long ago,
Ere heaving bellows learn'd to blow,
While organs yet were mute,
Timotheus, to his breathing flute
And sounding lyre
Could swell the soul to rage, or kindle soft desire
At last divine Cecilia came,
Inventress of the vocal frame;
The sweet enthusiast from her sacred store
Enlarged the former narrow bounds,
And added length to solemn sounds,
With Nature's mother-wit, and arts unknown before.
—Let old Timotheus yield the prize
Or both divide the crown;
He raised a mortal to the skies;
She drew an angel down!

PAUL LAWRENCE DUNBAR

PAUL LAWRENCE DUNBAR

1872—1906

MANDY LOU

COME away to dreamin' town,
Mandy Lou, Mandy Lou,
Whaih de skies don' nevah frown,
Mandy Lou.
Whaih de streets is paved with gol',
Whaih de days is nevah col',
An' no sheep strays f'om de fol',
Mandy Lou.

Ain't you tiahed of every day,
Mandy Lou, Mandy Lou,
Tek my han' an' come away,
Mandy Lou.
To the place whaih dreams is King,
Whaih my heart hol's everything,
An' my soul can allus sing,
Mandy Lou.

Come away to dream wid me,
Mandy Lou, Mandy Lou,
Whaih our hands an' hea'ts are free,
Mandy Lou.
Whaih de sands is shinin' white,
Whaih de revahs glistens bright,
Mandy Lou.

Come away to dreamland town,
Mandy Lou, Mandy Lou,
Whaih de fruit is bendin' down,
Des fu' you.

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

Smooth your brow of lovin' brown,
An' my love will be its crown;
Come away to dreamin' town,
Mandy Lou.

LORD DUNSANY

1878—

A SONG OF WANDERING

SOME crumpled-rose-leaf mountains, from forty miles
away,

Are luring me towards them through all the blazing
day.

Some crumpled-rose-leaf mountains flecked here and
there with blue.

They call to me and beckon as elfin hands might do.

And deeper pink beyond them a double summit
towers,

Like Chronos grave and weary above the younger
Powers.

Behind me the Sahara, before—those barren crags.

And with me the old hunter, illustrious in his rags.

When I am back in London, among the hoardings'
blaze,

And pictures of bad food and salt that men are paid
to praise,

When, bright with lights that dim the stars, the fool-
ish words are writ,

To Crumpled-rose-leaf Mountain my thought will
fly from it.

SIR EDWARD DYER

SIR EDWARD DYER

1545—1607

MY MIND TO ME A KINGDOM IS

My mind to me a kingdom is!

Such present joys therein I find
That it excels all other bliss

That earth affords, or grows by kind.

Though much I want which most would
have,

Yet still my mind forbids to crave.

No princely pomp, no wealthy store,

No force to win a victory,

No wily wit to salve a sore,

No shape to feed a loving eye—

To none of these I yield as thrall.

For why? My mind doth serve for all.

See how plenty surfeits oft,

And hasty climber soon do fall.

I see that those which are aloft

Mishap doth threaten most of all.

They get with toil, they keep with fear;

Such cares my mind could never bear.

Content to live, this is my stay;

I seek no more than may suffice;

I press to bear no haughty sway.

Look, what I lack my mind supplies:

Lo, thus I triumph like a king,

Content with that my mind doth bring.

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

Some have too much, yet still do crave!
I little have, and seek no more.
They are but poor, though much they have;
And I am rich, with little store.
They poor, I rich; they beg, I give;
They lack, I leave; they pine, I live.

I laugh not at another's loss;
I grudge not at another's pain;
No worldly waves my mind can toss;
My state at one doth still remain.
I fear no foe, I fawn no friend;
I loathe not life, nor dread my end.

Some weigh their pleasure by their lust,
Their wisdom by their rage of will,
Their treasure is their only trust,
A cloakèd craft their store of skill;
But all the pleasure that I find
Is to maintain a quiet mind.

My wealth is health and perfect ease,
My conscience clear, my choice defence.
I neither seek by bribes to please,
Nor by deceit to breed offence.
Thus do I live, thus will I die:
Would all did so, as well as I!

GEORGE ELIOT

GEORGE ELIOT

1819—1880

THE CHOIR INVISIBLE

O MAY I join the choir invisible
Of those immortal dead who live again
In minds made better by their presence: live
In pulses stirred to generosity,
In deeds of daring rectitude, in scorn
For miserable aims that end with self,
In thoughts sublime that pierce the night like
stars,

And with their mild persistence urge man's search
To vaster issues.

So to live is heaven.

To make undying music in the world,
Breathing as beauteous order that controls
With growing sway the growing life of man
So we inherit that sweet purity
For which we struggled, failed, and agonized
With widening retrospect that bred despair.
Rebellious flesh that would not be subdued,
A vicious parent shaming still its child
Poor anxious penitence, is quick dissolved;
Its discords, quenched by meeting harmonies,
Die in the large and charitable air.
And all our rarer, better, truer self,
That sobb'd religiously in yearning song,
That watch'd to ease the burthen of the world,
Laboriously tracing what must be,
And what may yet be better—saw within
A worthier image for the sanctuary,
And shaped it forth before the multitude

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

Divinely human, raising worship so
To higher reverence more mix'd with love—
That better self shall live till human Time
Shall fold its eyelids, and the human sky
Be gather'd like a scroll within the tomb
Unread for ever.

This is life to come,
Which martyr'd men have made more glorious
For us who strive to follow. May I reach
That purest heaven, be to other souls
The cup of strength in some great agony,
Enkindle generous ardour, feed pure love,
Beget the smiles that have no cruelty—
Be the sweet presence of a good diffused,
And in diffusion ever more intense.
So shall I join the choir invisible
Whose music is the gladness of the world.

JANE ELLIOTT

1727—1805

LAMENT FOR FLODDEN

I'VE heard them lilting at our ewe-milking,
Lasses a' lilting before dawn o' day;
But now they are moaning on ilka green loaning—
The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away.

At bughts, in the morning, nae blythe lads are
scorning,
Lasses are lonely and dowie and wae;
Nae daffin', nae gabbin', but sighing and sabbing,
Ilk ane lifts her leglin and hies her away.

ZOE ELLIOT AND STODDARD KING

In har'st, at the shearing, nae youths now are jeering,
ing,

Bandsters are lyart, and runkl'd, and gray;
At fear or at preaching, nae wooing, nae fleeching—
The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away.

At e'en, in the gloaming, nae youngers are roaming
'Bout stacks wi' the lasses at bogle to play;
But ilk ane sits drearie, lamenting her dearie—
The Flowers of the Forest are weded away.

Dool and wae for the order, sent our lads to the
Border!

The English, for ance, by guile wan the day;
The Flowers of the Forest, that fought aye the foremost,
most,

The prime of our land, are cauld in the clay.

We'll hear nae mair lilting at the ewe-milking;
Women and bairns are heartless and wae;
Sighing and moaning on ilka green loaning—
The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away.

ZOE ELLIOT AND STODDARD KING

THERE'S A LONG, LONG TRAIL

NIGHTS are growing very lonely,

Days are very long;

I'm a-growing weary only,

List'ning for your song.

Old remembrances are thronging

Thro' my memory,

Till it seems the world is full of dreams

Just to call you back to me.

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

CHORUS:

There's a long, long trail a-winding
Into the land of my dreams,
Where the nightingales are singing,
And a white moon beams;
There's a long, long night of waiting,
Until my dreams all come true;
Till the day when I'll be going down
That long, long trail with you.
All night long I hear you calling,
Calling sweet and low;
Seem to hear your footsteps falling,
Ev'ry where I go.
Tho' the road between us stretches,
Many a weary mile,
I forget that you're not with me yet,
When I think I see you smile.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

1803—1882

HEROISM

So nigh is grandeur to our dust,
So near is God to man,
When Duty whispers low, *Thou must*,
The youth replies, *I can*.

THE PROBLEM

I LIKE a church; I like a cowl;
I love a prophet of the soul;
And on my heart monastic aisles
Fall like sweet strains, or pensive smiles:

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

Yet not for all his faith can see
Would I that cowlèd churchman be.
Why should the vest on him allure,
Which I could not on me endure?

Not from a vain or shallow thought
His awful Jove young Phidias brought;
Never from lips of cunning fell
The thrilling Delphic oracle;
Out from the heart of nature rolled
The burdens of the Bible old;
The litanies of nations came,
Like the volcano's tongue of flame,
Up from the burning core below,—
The canticles of love and woe:
The hand that rounded Peter's dome
And groined the aisles of Christian Rome
Wrought in a sad sincerity;
Himself from God he could not free;
He builded better than he knew;
The conscious stone to beauty grew.

Knowst thou what wove yon woodbird's nest
Of leaves and feathers from her breast?
Or how the fish outbuilt her shell,
Painting with morn each annual cell?
Or how the sacred pine-tree adds
To her old leaves new myriads?
Such and so grew these holy piles,
While love and terror laid the tiles.
Earth proudly wears the Parthenon,
As the best gem upon her zone,
And Morning opes with haste her lids
To gaze upon the Pyramids;

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

O'er England's abbeys bends the sky,
As on its friends, with kindred eye;
For out of Thought's interior sphere
These wonders rose to upper air;
And Nature gladly gave them place,
Adopted them into her race,
And granted them an equal date
With Andes and with Ararat.

These temples grew as grows the grass;
Art might obey, but not surpass.
The passive Master lent his hand
To the vast soul that o'er him planned;
And the same power that reared the shrine
Bestrode the tribes that knelt within.
Ever the fiery Pentecost
Girds with one flame the countless host,
Trances the heart through chanting choirs
And through the priest the mind inspires.
The word unto the prophet spoken
Was writ on tables yet unbroken;
The word by seers or sibyls told,
In groves of oak, or fanes of gold,
Still floats upon the morning wind,
Still whispers to the willing mind.
One accent of the Holy Ghost
The heedless world hath never lost.
I know what say the fathers wise—
The Book itself before me lies,
Old Chrysostom, best Augustine,
And he who blent both in his line,
The younger Golden Lips or mines,
Taylor, the Shakespeare of divines.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

His words are music in my ear,
I see his cowlèd portrait dear;
And yet, for all his faith could see,
I would not the good bishop be.

CONCORD HYMN

By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood,
And fired the shot heard round the world.

The foe long since in silence slept;
Alike the conqueror silent sleeps;
And Time the ruined bridge has swept
Down the dark stream which seaward creeps.

On this green bank, by this soft stream,
We set to-day a votive stone;
That memory may their deed redeem,
When, like our sires, our sons are gone.

Spirit, that made those heroes dare
To die, and leave their children free,
Bid Time and Nature gently spare
The shaft we raise to them and thee.

GIVE ALL TO LOVE

GIVE all to love;
Obey thy heart;
Friends, kindred, days,
Estate, good fame,
Plans, credit, and the Muse—
Nothing refuse.

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

'Tis a brave master;
Let it have scope:
Follow it utterly,
Hope beyond hope:
High and more high
It dives into noon,
With wing unspent,
Untold intent;
But it is a god,
Knows its own path,
And the outlets of the sky.

It was never for the mean;
It requireth courage stout,
Souls above doubt,
Valor unbending:
Such 'twill reward;—
They shall return
More than they were,
And ever ascending.

Leave all for love;
Yet, hear me, yet,
One word more thy heart behoved,
One pulse more of firm endeavor—
Keep thee to-day,
To-morrow, for ever,
Free as an Arab
Of thy beloved.

Cling with life to the maid;
But when the surprise,
First vague shadow of surmise,
Flits across her bosom young,

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

Of a joy apart from thee,
Free be she, fancy-free;
Nor thou detain her vesture's hem,
Nor the palest rose she flung
From her summer diadem.

Though thou loved her as thyself,
As a self of purer clay;
Though her parting dims the day,
Stealing grace from all alive;
Heartily know,
When half-gods go
The gods arrive.

GOOD-BYE

GOOD-BYE, proud world! I'm going home;
Thou art not my friend, and I'm not thine.
Long through thy weary crowds I roam;
A river-ark on the ocean brine,
Long I've been toss'd like the driven foam,
But now, proud world, I'm going home.

Good-bye to flattery's fawning face,
To grandeur, with his wise grimace,
To upstart wealth's averted eye,
To supple office, low and high,
To crowded halls, to court and street,
To frozen hearts and hasting feet,
To those who go and those who come—
Good-bye, proud world! I'm going home.
I am going to my own hearthstone,
Bossom'd in yon green hills alone—

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

A secret nook in a pleasant land,
Whose groves the frolic fairies plann'd,
Where arches green, the livelong day,
Echo the blackbird's roundelay,
And vulgar feet have never trod—
A spot that is sacred to thought and God.

Oh, when I am safe in my sylvan home,
I tread on the pride of Greece and Rome,
And when I am stretch'd beneath the pines,
Where the evening star so holy shines,
I laugh at the lore and pride of man
At the sophist schools, and the learned clan;
For what are they all, in their high conceit,
When man in the bush with God may meet?

THE HUMBLE-BEE

BURLY, dozing humble-bee,
Where thou art is clime for me.
Let them sail for Porto Rique,
Far-off heats through seas to seek;
I will follow thee alone,
Thou animated torrid-zone!
Zigzag steerer, desert cheerer,
Let me chase thy waving lines;
Keep me nearer, me thy hearer,
Singing over shrubs and vines.

Insect lover of the sun,
Joy of thy dominion!
Sailor of the atmosphere;
Swimmer through the waves of air;

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

Voyager of light and noon;
Epicurean of June;
Wait, I prithee, till I come
Within earshot of thy hum,—
All without is martyrdom.

When the south wind, in May days,
With a net of shining haze
Silvers the horizon wall,
And with softness touching all,
Tints the human countenance
With a color of romance,
And infusing subtle heats,
Turns the sod to violets,
Thou, in sunny solitudes,
Rover of the underwoods,
The green silence dost displace
With thy mellow, breezy bass.
Hot midsummer's petted crone,
Sweet to me thy drowsy tone
Tells of countless sunny hours,
Long days, and solid banks of flowers;
Of gulfs of sweetness without bound
In Indian wildernesses found;
Of Syrian peace, immortal leisure,
Firmest cheer, and bird-like pleasure.

Aught unsavory or unclean
Hath my insect never seen;
But violets and bilberry bells,
Maple-sap and daffodels,
Grass with green flag half-mast high,
Succory to match the sky,

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

Columbine with horn of honey,
Scented fern, and agrimony,
Clover, catchfly, adder's-tongue,
And brier-roses, dwelt among;
All beside was unknown waste,
All was picture as he passed.

Wiser far than human seer,
Yellow-breeched philosopher!
Seeing only what is fair,
Sipping only what is sweet,
Thou dost mock at fate and care,
Leave the chaff, and take the wheat.
When the fierce northwestern blast
Cools sea and land so far and fast,
Thou already slumberest deep;
Woe and want thou canst outsleep;
Want and woe, which torture us,
Thy sleep makes ridiculous.

BRAHMA

IF the red slayer thinks he slays,
Or if the slain think he is slain,
They know not well the subtle ways
I keep, and pass, and turn again.

Far or forgot to me is near;
Shadow and sunlight are the same;
The vanished gods to me appear;
And one to me are shame and fame.

They reckon ill who leave me out;
When me they fly, I am the wings;

THOMAS DUNN ENGLISH

I am the doubter and the doubt,
And I the hymn the Brahmin sings.

The strong gods pine for my abode,
And pine in vain the sacred Seven;
But thou, meek lover of the good!
Find me, and turn thy back on heaven.

THOMAS DUNN ENGLISH

1819—1902

BEN BOLT

DON'T you remember sweet Alice, Ben Bolt,—
Sweet Alice whose hair was so brown,
Who wept with delight when you gave her a smile,
And trembled with fear at your frown?
In the old church-yard in the valley, Ben Bolt,
In a corner obscure and alone,
They have fitted a slab of the granite so gray,
And Alice lies under the stone.

Under the hickory tree, Ben Bolt,
Which stood at the foot of the hill,
Together we've lain in the noonday shade,
And listened to Appleton's mill.
The mill-wheel has fallen to pieces, Ben Bolt,
The rafters have tumbled in,
And a quiet which crawls round the walls as you
gaze
Has followed the olden din.

Do you mind the cabin of logs, Ben Bolt,
At the edge of the pathless wood,

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

And the button-ball tree with its motley limbs,
Which nigh by the doorstep stood?

The cabin to ruin has gone, Ben Bolt,
The tree you would seek for in vain;
And where once the lords of the forest waved
Are grass and the golden grain.

And don't you remember the school, Ben Bolt,
With the master so cruel and grim,
And the shaded nook in the running brook
Where the children went to swim?
Grass grows on the master's grave, Ben Bolt,
The spring of the brook is dry,
And of all the boys who were schoolmates then
There are only you and I.

There is change in the things I loved, Ben Bolt,
They have changed from the old to the new;
But I feel in the deeps of my spirit the truth,
There never was change in you.
Twelvemonths twenty have past, Ben Bolt,
Since first we were friends—yet I hail
Your presence a blessing, your friendship a truth,
Ben Bolt of the salt-sea gale.

JOHN ERSKINE

1879—

VALENTINE TO ONE'S WIFE

HEARTS and darts and maids and men,
Vows and valentines are here.
Will you give yourself again,
Love me for another year?

EURIPIDES

Those who give themselves forever,
All contingencies to cover,
Know but once the kind and clever
Strategies of loved and lover;

Rather let the year renew
Rituals of happiness;
When the season comes to woo,
Let me ask, and you say yes.

Love me for another year,
Here is heaven enough to climb,
If we measure, now and here,
Each delicious step of time.

EURIPIDES

Greek

480—406 B.C.

THE JOY OF LIFE

FROM "THE BACCHÆ"

WILL they ever come to me, ever again,
The long long dances,
On through the dark till the dim stars wane?
Shall I feel the dew on my throat, and the stream
Of wind in my hair? Shall our white feet gleam
In the dim expanses?
Oh, feet of a fawn to the greenwood fled,
Alone in the grass and the loveliness;
Leap of the hunted, no more in dread,
Beyond the snares and the deadly press:
Yet a voice still in the distance sounds,
A voice and a fear and a haste of hounds;

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

Oh wildly laboring, fiercely fleet,
Onward yet by river and glen. . . .

Is it joy or terror, ye storm-swift feet? . . .

To the dear lone lands, untroubled of men,
Where no voice sounds, and amid the shadowy green
The little things of the woodland live unseen.

But a better land is there
Where Olympus cleaves the air,
The high still dell where the Muses dwell,
Fairest of all things fair!
Oh there is Grace, and there is the Heart's Desire,
And peace to adore thee, thou Spirit of Guiding Fire!

Translated by Gilbert Murray

EUGENE FIELD

1850—1895

LITTLE BOY BLUE

THE little toy dog is covered with dust,
But sturdy and staunch he stands;
The little toy soldier is red with rust,
And his musket moulds in his hands.
Time was when the little toy dog was new,
And the soldier was passing fair;
And that was the time when our Little Boy Blue
Kissed them and put them there.

"Now don't you go till I come," he said,

"And don't you make any noise!"

So, toddling off to his trundle bed,

He dreamt of the pretty toys;

EUGENE FIELD

And, as he was dreaming, an angel song
Awakened our Little Boy Blue—
Oh! the years are many, the years are long,
But the little toy friends are true!

Ay, faithful to Little Boy Blue they stand,
Each in the same old place,
Awaiting the touch of a little hand,
The smile of a little face;
And they wonder, as waiting the long years through
In the dust of that little chair,
What has become of our Little Boy Blue,
Since he kissed them and put them there.

THE LITTLE PEACH

A LITTLE peach in the orchard grew,
A little peach of emerald hue:
Warmed by the sun, and wet by the dew,
It grew.

One day, walking the orchard through,
That little peach dawned on the view
Of Johnny Jones and his sister Sue—
Those two.

Up at the peach a club they threw:
Down from the limb on which it grew,
Fell the little peach of emerald hue—
Too true!

John took a bite, and Sue took a chew,
And then the trouble began to brew,—
Trouble the doctor couldn't subdue,—
Paregoric too.

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

Under the turf where the daisies grew,
They planted John and his sister Sue;
And their little souls to the angels flew—
Boo-hoo!

But what of the peach of emerald hue,
Warmed by the sun, and wet by the dew?
Ah, well! its mission on earth is through—
Adieu!

OUR TWO OPINIONS

Us two wuz boys when we fell out,—
Nigh to the age uv my youngest now;
Don't rec'lect what 't wuz about,
Some small deeff'rence, I'll allow.
Lived next neighbors twenty years,
A-hatin' each other, me 'nd Jim,—
He havin' *his* opinyin uv *me*,
'Nd *I* havin' *my* opinyin uv *him*.

Grew up together 'nd wouldn't speak,
Court'd sisters, 'nd marr'd 'em, too;
'Tended same meetin'-house oncet a week,
A-hatin' each other through 'nd through!
But when Abe Linkern asked the West
F'r soldiers, we answered,—me 'nd Jim,—
He havin' *his* opinyin uv *me*,
'Nd *I* havin' *my* opinyin uv *him*.

But down in Tennessee one night
Ther' wuz sound uv firin' fur away,
'Nd the sergeant allowed ther' 'd be a fight
With the Johnnie Rebs some time nex' day;

EUGENE FIELD

'Nd as I wuz thinkin' uv Lizzie 'nd home
Jim stood afore me, long 'nd slim,—
He having *his* opinyin uv *me*,
'Nd I havin' *my* opinyin uv *him*.

Seemed like we knew there wuz goin' to be
Serious trouble f'r me 'nd him;
Us two shuck hands, did Jim 'nd me,
But never a word from me or Jim!
He went *his* way 'nd I went *mine*,
'Nd into the battle's roar went we,—
I havin' *my* opinyin uv Jim,
'Nd *he* havin' *his* opinyin uv *me*.

Jim never come back from the war again,
But I hain't forgot that last, last night
When, waitin' f'r orders, us two men
Made up 'nd shuck hands, afore the fight.
'Nd, after it all, it's soothin' to know
That here *I* be 'nd yonder's Jim,—
He havin' *his* opinyin uv *me*,
'Nd *I* havin' *my* opinyin uv *him*.

THE DINKEY-BIRD

IN an ocean, 'way out yonder
(As all sapient people know,)
Is the land of Wonder-wander,
Whither children love to go:
It's their playing, romping, swinging,
That give great joy to me
While the Dinkey-Bird goes singing
In the amfalula tree!

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

There the gum-drops grow like cherries,
And taffy's thick as peas,—
Caramels you pick like berries
When, and where, and how you please;
Big red sugar-plums are clinging
To the cliffs beside that sea
Where the Dinkey-Bird is singing
In the amfalula tree.

So when children shout and scamper
And make merry all the day,
When there's naught to put a damper
To the ardor of their play;
When I hear their laughter ringing,
Then I'm sure as sure can be
That the Dinkey-Bird is singing
In the amfalula tree.

For the Dinkey-Bird's bravuras
And staccatos are so sweet,—
His roulades, apoggiaturas,
And robustos so complete,
That the youth of every nation—
Be they near or far away—
Have especial delectation
In that gladsome roundelay.

Their eyes grow bright and brighter,
Their lungs begin to crow,
Their hearts get light and lighter,
And their cheeks are all aglow;

EUGENE FIELD

For an echo cometh bringing
The news to all and me,
That the Dinkey-Bird is singing
In the amfalula tree.

I'm sure you like to go there
To see your feathered friend,—
And so many goodies grow there
You would like to comprehend!
Speed, little dreams, your winging
To that land across the sea
Where the Dinkey-Bird is singing
In the amfalula tree!

THE TRUTH ABOUT HORACE

It is very aggravating
To hear the solemn prating
Of the fossils who are stating
That old Horace was a prude;
When we know that with the ladies
He was always raising Hades,
And with many an escapade his
Best productions are imbued.

There's really not much harm in a
Large number of his carmina,
But these people find alarm in a
Few records of his acts;
So they'd squelch the muse caloric,
And to students sophomoric
They'd present as metaphoric
What old Horace meant for facts.

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

We have always thought 'em lazy;
Now we adjudge 'em crazy!
Why, Horace was a daisy
That was very much alive!
And the wisest of us know him
As his Lydia verses show him,—
Go, read that virile poem,—
It is No. 25.

He was a very owl, sir.
And starting out to prowl, sir,
You bet he made Rome howl, sir,
Until he filled his date;
With a massic-laden ditty
And a classic maiden pretty,
He painted up the city,
And Mæcenæ paid the freight!

WYNKEN, BLYNKEN, AND NOD

WYNKEN, Blynken, and Nod one night

Sailed off in a wooden shoe—

Sailed on a river of crystal light

Into a sea of dew.

“Where are you going, and what do you wish?”

The old moon asked the three.

“We have come to fish for the herring-fish

That live in this beautiful sea;

Nets of silver and gold have we,”

Said Wynken,

Blynken,

And Nod.

EUGENE FIELD

The old moon laughed and sang a song,
As they rocked in the wooden shoe;
And the wind that sped them all night long
Ruffled the waves of dew;
The little stars were the herring-fish
That lived in the beautiful sea.
"Now cast your nets wherever you wish—
Never afeard are we!"
So cried the stars to the fishermen three,
 Wynken,
 Blynken,
 And Nod.

All night long their nets they threw
To the stars in the twinkling foam—
Then down from the skies came the wooden shoe,
Bringing the fishermen home:
'Twas all so pretty a sail, it seemed
As if it could not be;
And some folk thought 'twas a dream they'd dreamed
Of sailing that beautiful sea;
But I shall name you the fishermen three:
 Wynken,
 Blynken,
 And Nod.

Wynken and Blynken are two little eyes,
And Nod is a little head,
And the wooden shoe that sailed the skies
Is a wee one's trundle-bed;
So shut your eyes while Mother sings
Of wonderful sights that be,
And you shall see the beautiful things
As you rock on the misty sea

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

Where the old shoe rocked the fishermen three,—
Wynken,
Blynken,
And Nod.

JAMES THOMAS FIELDS

1817—1881

THE OWL-CRITIC

"WHO stuffed that white owl?" No one spoke in
the shop,
The barber was busy, and he couldn't stop;
The customers, waiting their turns, were all reading
The "Daily," the "Herald," the "Post," little heed-
ing
The young man who blurted out such a blunt ques-
tion;
Not one raised a head, or even made a suggestion;
And the barber kept on shaving.

"Don't you see, Mr. Brown,"
Cried the youth, with a frown,
"How wrong the whole thing is,
How preposterous each wing is
How flattened the head is, how jammed down the
neck is—
In short, the whole owl, what an ignorant wreck
't is!
I make no apology;
I've learned owl-eology.

"I've passed days and nights in a hundred collections,
And cannot be blinded to any deflections

JAMES THOMAS FIELDS

Arising from unskilful fingers that fail
To stuff a bird right, from his beak to his tail.
Mister Brown! Mister Brown!
Do take that bird down,
Or you'll soon be the laughing-stock all over town!"
And the barber kept on shaving.

"I've *studied* owls,
And other night-fowls,
And I tell you
What I know to be true;
An owl cannot roost
With his limbs so unloosed;
No owl in this world
Ever had his claws curled,
Ever had his legs slanted,
Ever had his bill canted,
Ever had his neck screwed
Into that attitude.
He can't *do* it, because
'Tis against all bird-laws.

Anatomy teaches,
Ornithology preaches,
An owl has a toe
That can't turn out so!
I've made the white owl my study for years,
And to see such a job almost moves me to tears!
Mr. Brown, I'm amazed
You should be so gone crazed
As to put up a bird
In that posture absurd!

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

To look at that owl really brings on a dizziness;
The man who stuffed him don't half know his
business!"

And the barber kept on shaving.

"Examine those eyes.
I'm filled with surprise
Taxidermists should pass
Off on you such poor glass;
So unnatural they seem
They'd make Audubon scream,
And John Burroughs laugh
To encounter such chaff.
Do take that bird down;
Have him stuffed again, Brown!"

And the barber kept on shaving.

"With some sawdust and bark
I could stuff in the dark
An owl better than that.
I could make an old hat
Look more like an owl
Than that horrid fowl,
Stuck up there so stiff like a side of coarse leather.
In fact, about him there's not one natural feather."

Just then, with a wink and a sly normal lurch,
The owl, very gravely, got down from his perch,
Walked round, and regarded his fault-finding critic
(Who thought he was stuffed) with a glance
analytic,

And then fairly hooted, as if he should say:
"Your learning's at fault this time, anyway;

FRANCIS MILES FINCH

Don't waste it again on a live bird, I pray.
I'm an owl; you're another. Sir Critic, good day!"
And the barber kept on shaving.

FRANCIS MILES FINCH

1827—1907

THE BLUE AND THE GRAY

By the flow of the inland river,
Whence the fleets of iron have fled,
Where the blades of the grave-grass quiver,
Asleep are the ranks of the dead:—
Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the Judgment Day:—
Under the one, the Blue;
Under the other, the Gray.

These in the robings of glory,
Those in the gloom of defeat,
All with the battle-blood gory,
In the dusk of eternity meet:
Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the Judgment Day:—
Under the laurel, the Blue;
Under the willow, the Gray.

From the silence of sorrowful hours
The desolate mourners go,
Lovingly laden with flowers,
Alike for the friend and the foe:—
Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the Judgment Day:—
Under the roses, the Blue;
Under the lilies, the Gray.

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

So, with an equal splendor,
The morning sun-rays fall,
With a touch impartially tender,
On the blossoms blooming for all:—
Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the Judgment Day:—
Broidered with gold, the Blue;
Mellowed with gold, the Gray.

So, when the summer calleth,
On forest and field of grain,
With an equal murmur falleth
The cooling drip of the rain:—
Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the Judgment Day:—
Wet with the rain, the Blue;
Wet with the rain, the Gray.

Sadly, but not with upbraiding,
The generous deed was done.
In the storms of the years that are fading
No braver battle was won:
Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the Judgment Day:—
Under the blossoms, the Blue;
Under the garlands, the Gray.

No more shall the war-cry sever,
Or the winding rivers be red:
They banish our anger forever
When they laurel the graves of our dead!
Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the Judgment Day:—
Love and tears for the Blue;
Tears and love for the Gray.

CHESTER FIRKINS

CHESTER FIRKINS

1882—1915

ON A SUBWAY EXPRESS

I WHO have lost the stars, the sod,
For chilling pave and cheerless light,
Have made my meeting-place with God
A new and nether Night—

Have found a fane where thunder fills
Loud caverns, tremulous; and these
Atone me for my reverend hills
And moonlit silences.

A figment in the crowded dark,
Where men sit muted by the roar,
I ride upon the whirring Spark
Beneath the city's floor.

In this dim firmament, the stars
Whirl by in blazing files and tiers;
Kin meteors graze our flying bars,
Amid the spinning spheres.

Speed! speed! until the quivering rails
Flash silver where the head-light gleams,
As when on lakes the Moon impales
The waves upon its beams.

Life throbs about me, yet I stand
Outgazing on majestic Power:
Death rides with me, on either hand,
In my communion hour.

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

You that 'neath country skies can pray,
Scoff not at me, the city clod:
My only respite of the Day
Is this wild ride—with God.

SAM WALTER FOSS

1858—1911

THEN AG'IN

JIM BOWKER, he said, ef he'd had a fair show,
And a big enough town for his talents to grow
And the least bit assistance in hoein' his row,
Jim Bowker, he said,
He'd filled the world full of the sound of his name,
An' climb the top round in the ladder of fame.
It may have been so;
I dunno;
Jest so, it might been,
Then ag'in——

But he had tarnal luck—everythin' went ag'in him,
The arrers er fortune they allus 'ud pin him;
So he didn't get no chance to show off what was in
him.

Jim Bowker, he said.
Ef he'd had a fair show, you couldn't tell where
he'd come,
An' the feats he'd a-done, an' the heights he'd
a-clumb——

It may have been so;
I dunno;
Jest so it might been,
Then ag'in——

SAM WALTER FOSS

But we're all like Jim Bowker, thinks I, more or less—

Charge fate for our bad luck, ourselves for success,

An' give fortune the blame for all our distress,

As Jim Bowker, he said

If it hadn't been for luck an' misfortune an' sich,

We might a-been famous, an' might a-been rich.

It might be jest so;

I dunno;

Jest so it might been,

Then ag'in——

THE HOUSE BY THE SIDE OF THE ROAD

THERE are hermit souls that live withdrawn

In the place of their self-content,

There are souls like stars, that dwell apart,

In a fellowless firmament;

There are pioneer souls that blaze their paths

Where highways never ran—

But let me live by the side of the road

And be a friend to man.

Let me live in a house by the side of the road

Where the race of men go by—

The men who are good and the men who are bad,

As good and as bad as I.

I would not sit in the scorner's seat

Nor hurl the cynic's ban—

Let me live in a house by the side of the road

And be a friend to man.

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

I see from my house by the side of the road,
By the side of the highway of life,
The men who press with the ardor of hope,
The men who are faint with the strife,
But I turn not away from their smiles nor their tears,
Both parts of an infinite plan—
Let me live in a house by the side of the road
And be a friend to man.

I know there are brook-gladdened meadows ahead,
And mountains of wearisome height;
That the road passes on through the long afternoon
And stretches away to the night.
And still I rejoice when the travellers rejoice
And weep with the strangers that moan,
Nor live in my house by the side of the road
Like a man who dwells alone.

Let me live in my house by the side of the road,
Where the race of men go by—
They are good, they are bad, they are weak, they are
strong,
Wise, foolish—so am I.
Then why should I sit in the scorner's seat,
Or hurl the cynic's ban?
Let me live in my house by the side of the road
And be a friend to man.

STEPHEN COLLINS FOSTER

STEPHEN COLLINS FOSTER

1826—1864

OLD FOLKS AT HOME

WAY down upon de Swanee Ribber,
Far, far away,
Dere's wha my heart is turning ebber,
Dere's wha de old folks stay.
All up and down de whole creation
Sadly I roam,
Still longing for de old plantation,
And for de old folks at home.

All de world am sad and dreary,
Eberywhere I roam;
Oh, darkeys, how my heart grows weary,
Far from de old folks at home!

All round de little farm I wandered
When I was young,
Den many happy days I squandered,
Many de songs I sung.
When I was playing wid my brudder
Happy was I;
Oh, take me to my kind old mudder!
Dere let me live and die.

One little hut among de bushes,
One dat I love,
Still sadly to my memory rushes,
No matter where I rove.

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

When will I see de bees a-humming
All round de comb?
When will I hear de banjo tumming,
Down in my good old home?

All de world am sad and dreary,
Eberywhere I roam,
Oh, darkeys, how my heart grows weary,
Far from de old folks at home!

MASSA'S IN DE COLD GROUND

ROUND de meadows am a-ringing
De darkeys' mournful song,
While de mocking-bird am singing,
Happy as de day am long.
Where de ivy am a-creeping,
O'er de grassy mound,
Dere old massa am a-sleeping,
Sleeping in de cold, cold ground.

Down in de corn-field
Hear dat mournful sound:
All de darkeys am a-weeping,—
Massa's in de cold, cold ground.

When de autumn leaves were falling,
When de days were cold,
'T was hard to hear old massa calling,
Cayse he was so weak and old.
Now de orange tree am blooming
On de sandy shore,
Now de summer days am coming,—
Massa nebber calls no more.

STEPHEN COLLINS FOSTER

Massa make de darkeys love him,
Cayse he was so kind;
Now dey sadly weep above him,
Mourning cayse he leave dem behind.
I cannot work before to-morrow,
Cayse de tear-drop flow;
I try to drive away my sorrow,
Pickin' on de old banjo.

Down in de corn-field
Hear dat mournful sound:
All de darkeys am a-weeping,—
Massa's in de cold, cold ground.

MY OLD KENTUCKY HOME

THE sun shines bright in the old Kentucky home;
'T is summer, the darkeys are gay;
The corn-top's ripe, and the meadow's in the bloom,
While the birds make music all the day.
The young folks roll on the little cabin floor,
All merry, all happy and bright;
By-'n'-by hard times comes a-knocking at the door:—
Then my old Kentucky home, good-night!

Weep no more, my lady,
O, weep no more to-day!
We will sing one song for the old Kentucky
home,
For the old Kentucky home, far away.

They hunt no more for the possum and the coon,
On the meadow, the hill, and the shore;
They sing no more by the glimmer of the moon,
On the bench by the old cabin door.

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

The day goes by like a shadow o'er the heart,
With sorrow, where all was delight;
The time has come when the darkeys have to part:—
Then my old Kentucky home, good-night!

The head must bow, and the back will have to bend,
Wherever the darkey may go;
A few more days, and the trouble all will end,
In the field where the sugar-canes grow.
A few more days for to tote the weary load,—
No matter, 't will never be light;
A few more days till we totter on the road:—
Then my old Kentucky home, good-night!

Weep no more, my lady,
O, weep no more to-day!
We will sing one song for the old Kentucky
home,
For the old Kentucky home, far away.

PHILIP FRENEAU

1752—1832

TO A CATY-DID

IN a branch of willow hid
Sings the evening Caty-did:
From the lofty locust bough
Feeding on a drop of dew,
In her suit of green arrayed
Hear her singing in the shade—
Caty-did, Caty-did, Caty-did!

PHILIP FRENEAU

While upon a leaf you tread,
Or repose your little head
On your sheet of shadows laid,
All the day you nothing said:
Half the night your cheery tongue
Revelled out its little song,—
Nothing else but Caty-did.

From your lodging on the leaf
Did you utter joy or grief?
Did you only mean to say,
I have had my summer's day,
And am passing, soon, away
To the grave of Caty-did:
Poor, unhappy Caty-did!

But you would have uttered more
Had you known of nature's power;
From the world when you retreat,
And a leaf's your winding sheet,
Long before your spirit fled,
Who can tell but nature said,—
Live again, my Caty-did!
Live, and chatter Caty-did.

Tell me, what did Caty do?
Did she mean to trouble you?
Why was Caty not forbid
To trouble little Caty-did?
Wrong, indeed, at you to fling,
Hurting no one while you sing,—
Caty-did! Caty-did! Caty-did!

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

Why continue to complain?
Caty tells me she again
Will not give you plague or pain;
Caty says you may be hid,
Caty will not go to bed
While you sing to us Caty-did,—
Caty-did! Caty-did! Caty-did!

But, while singing, you forgot
To tell us what did Caty *not*:
Caty did not think of cold,
Flocks retiring to the fold,
Winter with his wrinkles old;
Winter, that yourself foretold
When you gave us Caty-did.

Stay serenely on your nest;
Caty now will do her best,
All she can, to make you blest;
But you want no human aid,—
Nature, when she formed you, said,
“Independent you are made,
My dear little Caty-did:
Soon yourself must disappear
With the verdure of the year,”
And to go, we know not where,
With your song of Caty-did.

ROBERT FROST

ROBERT FROST

1875—

MENDING WALL

SOMETHING there is that doesn't love a wall,
That sends the frozen ground-swell under it,
And spills the upper boulders in the sun;
And makes gaps even two can pass abreast.
The work of hunters is another thing:
I have come after them and made repair
Where they have left not one stone on stone,
But they would have the rabbit out of hiding,
To please the yelping dogs. The gaps I mean,
No one has seen them made or heard them made,
But at spring mending-time we find them there.
I let my neighbor know beyond the hill;
And on a day we meet to walk the line
And set the wall between us once again.
We keep the wall between us as we go.
To each the boulders that have fallen to each.
And some are loaves and some so nearly balls
We have to use a spell to make them balance:
"Stay where you are until our backs are turned!"
We wear our fingers rough with handling them.
Oh, just another kind of out-door game,
One on a side. It comes to little more:
There where it is we do not need the wall:
He is all pine and I am apple orchard.

My apple trees will never get across
And eat the cones under his pines, I tell him.
He only says, "Good fences make good neighbors."
Spring is the mischief in me, and I wonder

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

If I could put a notion in his head:
"Why do they make good neighbors? Isn't it
Where there are cows? But here there are no cows.
Before I built a wall I'd ask to know
What I was walling in or walling out,
And to whom I was like to give offence.
Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
That wants it down." I could say "Elves" to him,
But it's not elves exactly, and I'd rather
He said it for himself. I see him there
Bringing a stone grasped firmly by the top
In each hand, like an old-stone savage armed.
He moves in darkness as it seems to me,
Not of woods only and the shade of trees.
He will not go behind his father's saying,
And he likes having thought of it so well
He says again, "Good fences make good neighbors."

THE DEATH OF THE HIRED MAN

MARY sat musing on the lamp-flame at the table
Waiting for Warren. When she heard his step,
She ran on tip-toe down the darkened passage
To meet him in the doorway with the news
And put him on his guard. "Silas is back."
She pushed him outward with her through the door
And shut it after her. "Be kind," she said.
She took the market things from Warren's arms
And set them on the porch, then drew him down
To sit beside her on the wooden steps.
"When was I ever anything but kind to him?
But I'll not have the fellow back," he said.
"I told him so last haying, didn't I?"

ROBERT FROST

'If he left then,' I said, 'that ended it.'
What good is he? Who else will harbour him
At his age for the little he can do?
What help he is there's no depending on.
Off he goes always when I need him most.
'He thinks he ought to earn a little pay,
Enough at least to buy tobacco with,
So he won't have to beg and be beholden.'
'All right,' I say, 'I can't afford to pay
Any fixed wages, though I wish I could.'
'Someone else can.' 'Then someone else will have
to.'

I shouldn't mind his bettering himself
If that was what it was. You can be certain,
When he begins like that, there's someone at him
Trying to coax him off with pocket-money,—
In haying time, when any help is scarce.
In winter he comes back to us. I'm done."

"Sh! not so loud: he'll hear you," Mary said.

"I want him to: he'll have to soon or late."

"He's worn out. He's asleep beside the stove.
When I came up from Rowe's I found him here,
Huddled against the barn-door fast asleep,
A miserable sight, and frightening, too—
You needn't smile—I didn't recognise him—
I wasn't looking for him—and he's changed.
Wait till you see."

"Where did you say he'd been?"

"He didn't say. I dragged him to the house,
And gave him tea and tried to make him smoke.

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

I tried to make him talk about his travels.
Nothing would do: he just kept nodding off."

"What did he say? Did he say anything?"

"But little."

"Anything? Mary, confess
He said he'd come to ditch the meadow for me."

"Warren!"

"But did he? I just want to know."

"Of course he did. What would you have him
say?

Surely you wouldn't grudge the poor old man
Some humble way to save his self-respect.
He added, if you really care to know,
He meant to clear the upper pasture, too.
That sounds like something you have heard before?
Warren, I wish you could have heard the way
He jumbled everything. I stopped to look
Two or three times—he made me feel so queer—
To see if he was talking in his sleep.
He ran on Harold Wilson—you remember—
The boy you had in haying four years since.
He's finished school, and teaching in his college.
Silas declares you'll have to get him back.
He says they two will make a team for work:
Between them they will lay this farm as smooth!
The way he mixed that in with other things.
He thinks young Wilson a likely lad, though daft
On education—you know how they fought
All through July under the blazing sun,

ROBERT FROST

Silas up on the cart to build the load,
Harold along beside to pitch it on."

"Yes, I took care to keep well out of earshot."

"Well, those days trouble Silas like a dream.
You wouldn't think they would. How some things
linger!

Harold's young college boy's assurance piqued him.
After so many years he still keeps finding
Good arguments he sees he might have used.
I sympathise. I know just how it feels
To think of the right thing to say too late.
Harold's associated in his mind with Latin.
He asked me what I thought of Harold's saying
He studied Latin like the violin
Because he liked it—that an argument!
He said he couldn't make the boy believe
He could find water with a hazel prong—
Which showed how much good school had ever
done him.

He wanted to go over that. But most of all
He thinks if he could have another chance
To teach him how to build a load of hay——"

"I know, that's Silas' one accomplishment.
He bundles every forkful in its place,
And tags and numbers it for future reference,
So he can find and easily dislodge it
In the unloading. Silas does that well.
He takes it out in bunches like big birds' nests.
You never see him standing on the hay
He's trying to lift, straining to lift himself."

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

"He thinks if he could teach him that, he'd be
Some good perhaps to someone in the world.
He hates to see a boy the fool of books.
Poor Silas, so concerned for other folk,
And nothing to look backward to with pride,
And nothing to look forward to with hope,
So now and never any different."
Part of a moon was falling down the west,
Dragging the whole sky with it to the hills.
Its light poured softly in her lap. She saw
And spread her apron to it. She put out her hand
Among the harp-like morning-glory strings,
Taut with the dew from garden bed to eaves,
As if she played unheard the tenderness
That wrought on him beside her in the night.
"Warren," she said, "he has come home to die:
You needn't be afraid he'll leave you this time."

"Home," he mocked gently.

"Yes, what else but home?
It all depends on what you mean by home.
Of course he's nothing to us, any more
Than was the hound that came a stranger to us
Out of the woods, worn out upon the trail."

"Home is the place where, when you have to go
there,
They have to take you in."

"I should have called it
Something you somehow haven't to deserve."

ROBERT FROST

Warren leaned out and took a step or two,
Picked up a little stick, and brought it back
And broke it in his hand and tossed it by.
"Silas has better claim on us, you think,
Than on his brother? Thirteen little miles
As the road winds would bring him to his door.
Silas has walked that far no doubt to-day.
Why didn't he go there? His brother's rich,
A somebody—director in the bank."

"He never told us that."

"We know it though."

"I think his brother ought to help, of course.
I'll see to that if there is need. He ought of right
To take him in, and might be willing to—
He may be better than appearances.
But have some pity on Silas. Do you think
If he'd had any pride in claiming kin
Or anything he looked for from his brother,
He'd keep so still about him all this time?"

"I wonder what's between them."

"I can tell you.

Silas is what he is—we wouldn't mind him—
But just the kind that kinsfolk can't abide.
He never did a thing so very bad.
He don't know why he isn't quite as good
As anyone. He won't be made ashamed
To please his brother, worthless though he is."

"I can't think Si ever hurt anyone."

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

"No, but he hurt my heart the way he lay
And rolled his old head on that sharp-edged chair-
back.

He wouldn't let me put him on the lounge.
You must go in and see what you can do.
I made the bed up for him there to-night.
You'll be surprised at him—how much he's broken.
His working days are done; I'm sure of it."

"I'd not be in a hurry to say that."

"I haven't been. Go, look, see for yourself.
But, Warren, please remember how it is:
He's come to help you ditch the meadow.
He has a plan. You mustn't laugh at him.
He may not speak of it, and then he may.
I'll sit and see if that small sailing cloud
Will hit or miss the moon."

It hit the moon.
Then there were three there, making a dim row,
The moon, the little silver cloud, and she.

Warren returned—too soon, it seemed to her,
Slipped to her side, caught up her hand and waited.

"Warren," she questioned.

"Dead," was all he answered.

WILFRED J. FUNK

WILFRED J. FUNK

1883—

THE INSATIABLE SEX

IF I scaled the heights of Venus
And ransacked ten million stars
Of their fineries—Orsinus,
Mercury, Arcturus, Mars.

Plucked the Pleiades and hung them
Flaming on your ivory breast,
With the shining moon among them
As a diadem and crest.

Seized the Milky Way and tore it
From the skies to make a gown
For you, dearest, and you wore it
With Orion as a crown—

Would it help you? Would you try a
Little thrift then? No! My guess is
You would merely go and buy a
Dozen other hats and dresses!

FROM A DOWN-TOWN SKYSCRAPER

OVER my ledger I can see
The giant ships go down the bay,
And there's no one of them but holds
My heart aboard as stowaway.

And one will steam to China Sea
And one will swing around the Horn

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

And, Oh! I'd be a happy lad
If I were only sailor-born.

One golden day I'll break my bonds
And close my books and wander free,
And then another pale-faced lad
Will add my figures up for me.

DAVID GARRICK

1716—1779

HEARTS OF OAK

COME cheer up my lads, 'tis to glory we steer,
To add something new to this wonderful year;
To honour we call you, not press you like slaves,
For who are so free as the sons of the waves?

Hearts of Oak are our ships, Hearts of Oak are our
men,

We always are ready,
Steady, boys, steady,
We'll fight and we'll conquer again and again.

We ne'er meet our foes but we wish them to stay,
They ne'er meet us but they wish us away;
If they run, then we follow, and drive them ashore,
For if they won't fight us, we cannot do more.

Hearts of Oak, &c.

Monsieur Thurot in the absence of Boyce,
Went over to Ireland to brag the dear boys;
Near Man, Elliot met him, and gave him a blow,
Which sent him to tell it to Pluto below.

Hearts of Oak, &c.

THEODOSIA GARRISON

They talk to invade us, these terrible foes,
They frighten our women, our children, and beaux;
But, if their flat bottoms in darkness come o'er,
Sure Britons they'll find to receive them on shore.
Hearts of Oak, &c.

We'll make them to run, and we'll make them to
sweat,
In spite of the Devil and Russel's Gazette;
Then cheer up my lads, with one heart let us sing,
Our soldiers, our sailors, our statesmen, our king.
Hearts of Oak, &c.

THEODOSIA GARRISON

1874—

THE JOY O' LIFE

OH, the Joy o' Life goes singing through the high-
way,
Oh, the Joy o' Life goes swinging through the
green,
And the form of her is slight as a crescent moon
at night
And her face is some strange flower none hath seen.
She beckoned me and what could I but follow?
(Oh, I have seen the glamour of her eyes!)
Through the winding o' the ways, through the hun-
dred nights and days
Must I follow where she lures me woman-wise.

My plough—I left it idle in the furrow—
My harvest lies for other eyes to scan,

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

For it's fare ye well to loam, to hearthstone and to
home
When the Joy o' Life is calling to a man.

Oh, the Joy o' Life she calls me from the valley,
Oh, the Joy o' Life, she hails me from the height,
And her voice is like the thrill of the thrush when
noon is still

And her laughter is the lilting of delight.
I follow through the sunshine and the moonshine—
(Oh, I have seen the waving of her hand!)
In the paths that know the fleet, flying touches of
her feet
At the music of her mocking of command.

My friend—I left him fasting at my threshold—
My sweetheart is another man's to wife,
For it's fare ye well my own, and it's laugh and turn
alone
When a man has heard the voice of Joy o' Life.

Oh, the Joy o' Life she ever flies before me,
Oh, the Joy o' Life, she may not turn or wait,
But the day must dawn at last when the distances
are passed
And the heart of me is leaping to its mate.
I have wooed her with the strength of my pur-
suing—
(Oh, I shall know the sweetness of her mouth!)
And I may not faint or pine till her hand hath closed
in mine
Like the touch of silvern water in the drouth.

THEODOSIA GARRISON

My dead—I left them sleeping in the churchyard—
My gods I thrust aside to bless or ban,
For it's fare ye well and hie, and it's follow till ye die
When the Joy o' Life is calling to a man.

THE LITTLE CHRISTIAN

HE trembled in the morning,
At noon he was afraid,
And heavy on his heart at night
The hand of fear was laid.

A presence walked beside him
Of horror and of fright—
A shadow in the sunshine,
A menace in the night.

And this that dragged his childhood,
This thing of scourge and rod,
They gave him as a priceless gift
And bade him call it God.

They made for him a fear that killed
The child-joy in his breast;
They made for him a shape of dread
And bade him love it best.

O Mild, O Just, O Merciful!
What then shall be their shame—
These souls who teach a little child
To shudder at Thy name!

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

THEOPHILE GAUTIER

1811—1872

FRENCH

ART

ALL things are doubly fair
If patience fashion them
And care—
Verse, enamel, marble, gem.

No idle chains endure:
Yet, Muse, to walk aright
Lace tight
Thy buskin proud and sure.

Fie on facile measure,
A shoe where every lout
At pleasure
Slip his foot in and out!

Sculptor lay by the clay
On which thy nerveless finger
May linger,
Thy thoughts flown far away.

Keep to Carrara rare,
Struggle with Paros cold,
That hold
The subtle line and fair.

Lest haply nature lose
That proud, that perfect line,
Make thine
The bronze of Syracuse.

THEOPHILE GAUTIER

And with a tender dread
Upon an agate's face
 Retrace
Apollo's golden head.

Despise a watery hue
And tints that soon expire.
 With fire
Burn thine enamel true.

Twine, twine in artful wise
The blue-green mermaid's arms,
 Mid charms
Of thousand heraldries.

Show in their triple lobe
Virgin and Child, that hold
 Their globe,
Cross crowned and aureoled.

—All things return to dust
Save beauties fashioned well
 The bust
Outlasts the citadel.

Oft doth the plowman's heel
Breaking an ancient clod,
 Reveal
A Cæsar or a god.

The gods, too, die, alas!
But deathless and more strong
 Than brass
Remains the sovereign song.

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

Chisel and carve and file,
Till thy vague dream imprint
 Its smile
On the unyielding flint.

Translated by George Santayana

LOVE AT SEA

WE are in love's land to-day;
 Where shall we go?
Love, shall we start or stay,
 Or sail or row?
There's many a wind and way,
And never a May but May;
We are in love's land to-day;
 Where shall we go?

Our landwind is the breath
Of sorrows kissed to death
 And joys that were;
Our ballast is a rose;
Our way lies where God knows
 And love knows where
 We are in love's land to-day—

Our seamen are fledged loves,
Our masts are bills of doves,
 Our decks fine gold;
Our ropes are dead maids' hair,
Our stores are love-shafts fair
 And manifold.
 We are in love's land to-day—

THEOPHILE GAUTIER

Where shall we land you, sweet?
On fields of strange men's feet,
Or fields near home?
Or where the fire-flowers blow,
Or where the flowers of snow
Or flowers of foam?
We are in love's land to-day—

Land me, she says, where love
Shows but one shaft, one dove,
One heart, one hand.
—A shore like that, my dear,
Lies where no man will steer,
No maiden land.

Translated by Algernon Charles Swinburne.

CLARIMONDE

WITH elbow buried in the downy pillow
I've lain and read,
All through the night, a volume strangely written
In tongues long dead.

For at my bedside lie no dainty slippers;
And, save my own,
Under the paling lamp I hear no breathing:—
I am alone!

But there are yellow bruises on my body
And violet stains;
Though no white vampire came with lips blood-
crimsoned
To suck my veins!

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

Now I bethink me of a sweet weird story,
That in the dark
Our dead loves thus with seal of chilly kisses
Our bodies mark.

Gliding beneath the coverings of our couches
They share our rest,
And with their dead lips sign their loving visit
On arm and breast.

Darksome and cold the bed where now she slumbers,
I loved in vain,
With sweet eyelids closed, to be reopened
Never again.

Dead sweetheart, can it be that thou hast lifted
With thy frail hand
Thy coffin-lid, to come to me again
From shadowland?

Thou who, one joyous night, didst, pale and speech-
less,
Pass from us all,
Dropping thy silken mask and gift of flowers
Amidst the ball?

Oh, fondest of my loves, from that far heaven
Where thou must be,
Hast thou returned to pay the debt of kisses
Thou owest to me?

Translated by Lafcadio Hearn.

WILFRED GIBSON

WILFRED GIBSON

1878—

IN THE AMBULANCE

"Two rows of cabbages,
Two of curly-greens,
Two rows of early peas,
Two of kidney beans."

That's what he is muttering,
Making such a song,
Keeping other chaps awake,
The whole night long.

Both his legs are shot away,
And his head is light;
So he keeps on muttering
All the blessed night:

"Two rows of cabbages,
Two of curly-greens,
Two rows of early peas,
Two of kidney beans."

W. S. GILBERT

1836—1911

TO THE TERRESTRIAL GLOBE

ROLL on, thou ball, roll on!
Through pathless realms of Space
Roll on!
What though I'm a sorry case?
What though I cannot meet my bills?

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

What though I suffer toothache's ills?
What though I swallow countless pills?
 Never *you* mind!
 Roll on!

Roll on, thou ball, roll on!
Through seas of inky air
 Roll on!

It's true I have no shirts to wear;
It's true my butcher's bill is due;
It's true my prospects all look blue—
But don't let that unsettle you:
 Never *you* mind!
 Roll on!

[It rolls on.]

ELLEN M'JONES ABERDEEN

MACPHAIRSON CLONGLOCKETTY ANGUS M'CLAN
Was the son of an elderly labouring man,
You've guessed him a Scotchman, shrewd reader, at
 sight,
And p'raps altogether, shrewd reader, you're right.

From the bonnie blue Forth of the hills of Deeside,
Round by Dingwall and Wrath to the mouth of
 the Clyde,
There wasn't a child or a woman or man
Who could pipe with CLONGLOCKETTY ANGUS
 M'CLAN.

No other could wake such detestable groans,
With reed and with chaunter—with bag and with
 drones:

W. S. GILBERT

All day and all night he delighted the chiefs
With sniggering pibrochs and jiggety reels.

He'd clamber a mountain and squat on the ground,
And the neighbouring maidens would gather around
To list to his pipes and to gaze in his e'en,
Especially ELLEN M'JONES ABERDEEN.

All loved their M'CLAN, save a Sassenach brute,
Who came to the Highlands to fish and to shoot;
He dressed himself up in a Highlander way,
Though his name it was PATTISON CORBY TORBAY.

TORBAY had incurred a good deal of expense
To make him a Scotchman in every sense;
But this is a matter, you'll readily own,
That isn't a question of tailors alone.

A Sassenach chief may be bonily built,
He may purchase a sporran, a bonnet, and kilt;
Stick a skeam in his hose—wear an acre of stripes—
But he cannot assume an affection for pipes.

CLONGLOCKETTY's pipings all night and all day
Quite frenzied poor PATTISON CORBY TORBAY;
The girls were amused at his singular spleen,
Especially ELLEN M'JONES ABERDEEN.

"MACPHAIRSON CLONGLOCKETTY ANGUS, my lad,
With pibrochs and reels you are driving me mad;
If you really must play on that cursed affair,
My goodness! play something resembling an air."

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

Boiled over with blood of MACPHAIRSON M'CLAN—
The clan of CLONGLOCKETTY rose as one man;
For all were enraged at the insult, I ween—
Especially ELLEN M'JONES ABERDEEN.

"Let's show," said M'CLAN, "to this Sassenach loon
That the bagpipes can play him a regular tune.
Let's see," said M'CLAN, as he thoughtfully sat,
" 'In My Cottage' is easy—I'll practise at that."

He blew at this "Cottage," and blew with a will,
For a year, seven months, and a fortnight, until
(You'll hardly believe it) M'CLAN, I declare,
Elicited something resembling an air.

It was wild—it was fitful—as wild as the breeze—
It wandered about into several keys;
It was jerky, spasmodic, and harsh, I'm aware,
But still it distinctly suggested an air.

The Sassenach screamed, and the Sassenach danced,
He shrieked in his agony—bellowed and pranced;
And the maidens who gathered rejoiced at the scene,
Especially ELLEN M'JONES ABERDEEN.

"Hech gather, hech gather, hech gather around;
And fill a' yer lugs wi' the exquisite sound.
An air frae the bagpipes—beat that if ye can!
Hurrah for CLONGLOCKETTY ANGUS M'CLAN!"

The fame of his piping spread over the land:
Respectable widows proposed for his hand,
And maidens came flocking to sit on the green—
Especially ELLEN M'JONES ABERDEEN.

W. S. GILBERT

One morning the fidgety Sassenach swore
He'd stand it no longer—he drew his claymore,
And (this was, I think, in extremely bad taste),
Divided CLONGLOCKETTY close to the waist.

Oh! loud were the wailings for ANGUS M'CLAN—
Oh! deep was the grief for that excellent man—
The maids stood aghast at the horrible scene,
Especially ELLEN M'JONES ABERDEEN.

It sorrowed poor PATTISON CORBY TORBAY
To find them "take on" in this serious way,
He pitied the poor little fluttering birds,
And solaced their souls with the following words:—

"Oh, maidens," said PATTISON, touching his hat,
"Don't snivel, my dears, for a fellow like that;
Observe, I'm a very superior man,
A much better fellow than ANGUS M'CLAN."

They smiled when he winked and addressed them as
"dears,"
And they all of them vowed, as they dried up their
tears,
A pleasanter gentlemen never was seen—
Especially ELLEN M'JONES ABERDEEN.

CAPTAIN REECE

OF all the ships upon the blue
No ship contained a better crew
Than that of worthy CAPTAIN REECE?
Commanding of *The Mantelpiece*.

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

He was adored by all his men,
For worthy CAPTAIN REECE, R.N.,
Did all that lay within him to
Promote the comfort of his crew.

If ever they were dull or sad,
Their captain danced to them like mad,
Or told, to make the time pass by,
Droll legends of his infancy.

A feather bed had every man,
Warm slippers and hot-water can,
Brown windsor from the captain's store,
A valet, too, to every four.

Did they with thirst in summer burn?
Lo, seltzogenes at every turn,
And on all very sultry days
Cream ices handed round on trays.

Then currant wine and ginger pops
Stood handily on all the "tops";
And, also, with amusement rife,
A "Zoetrope, or Wheel of Life."

New volumes came across the sea
From MISTER MUDIE's libraree;
The Times and *Saturday Review*
Beguiled the leisure of the crew.

Kind-hearted CAPTAIN REECE, R.N.,
Was quite devoted to his men;
In point of fact, good CAPTAIN REECE
Beatified *The Mantelpiece*.

W. S. GILBERT

One summer eve, at half past ten,
He said (addressing all his men):
"Come, tell me, please, what I can do
To please and gratify my crew?

"By any reasonable plan
I'll make you happy, if I can;
My own convenience count as *nil*;
It is my duty, and I will."

Then up and answered WILLIAM LEE
(The kindly captain's coxswain he,
A nervous, shy, low-spoken man),
He cleared his throat and thus began:

"You have a daughter, CAPTAIN REECE,
Ten female cousins and a niece,
A ma, if what I'm told is true,
Six sisters, and an aunt or two.

"Now, somehow, sir, it seems to me,
More friendly-like we all should be
If you united of 'em to
Unmarried members of the crew.

"If you'd ameliorate our life,
Let each select from them a wife;
And as for nervous me, old pal,
Give me your own enchanting gal!"

Good CAPTAIN REECE, that worthy man,
Debated on his coxswain's plan:
"I quite agree," he said, "O BILL;
It is my duty, and I will.

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

"My daughter, that enchanting gurl,
Has just been promised to an earl,
And all my other familiee,
To peers of various degree.

"But what are dukes and viscounts to
The happiness of all my crew?
The word I gave you I'll fulfil;
It is my duty, and I will.

"As you desire it shall befall,
I'll settle thousands on you all,
And I shall be, despite my hoard,
The only bachelor on board.

The boatswain of *The Mantelpiece*,
He blushed and spoke to CAPTAIN REECE.
"I beg your honour's leave," he said,
"If you would wish to go and wed,

"I have a widowed mother who
Would be the very thing for you—
She long has loved you from afar,
She washes for you, CAPTAIN R."

The captain saw the dame that day—
Addressed her in his playful way—
"And did it want a wedding ring?
It was a tempting ickle sing!

"Well, well, the chaplain I will seek,
We'll all be married this day week—
At yonder church upon the hill;
It is my duty, and I will!"

W. S. GILBERT

The sisters, cousins, aunts, and niece,
And widowed ma of CAPTAIN REECE,
Attended there as they were bid;
It was their duty, and they did.

THE YARN OF THE "NANCY BELL"

'Twas on the shores that round our coast
From Deal to Ramsgate span,
That I found alone on a piece of stone
An elderly naval man.

His hair was weedy, his beard was long,
And weedy and long was he,
And I heard this wight on the shore recite,
In a singular minor key:

"Oh, I am a cook and a captain bold,
And the mate of the Nancy brig,
And a bo'sun tight, and a midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain's gig."

And he shook his fists and he tore his hair,
Till I really felt afraid,
For I couldn't help thinking the man had been
drinking,
And so I simply said:

"Oh, elderly man, it's little I know
Of the duties of men of the sea,
But I'll eat my hand if I understand
How you can possibly be

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

"At once a cook, and a captain bold,
And the mate of the *Nancy* brig,
And a bo'sun tight, and a midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain's gig."

Then he gave a hitch to his trousers, which
Is a trick all seamen larn,
And having got rid of a thumping quid,
He spun this painful yarn:

"'Twas in the good ship *Nancy Bell*
That we sailed to the Indian sea,
And there on a reef we come to grief,
Which has often occurred to me.

"And pretty nigh all o' the crew was drowned
(There was seventy-seven o' soul),
And only ten of the *Nancy's* men
Said 'Here!' to the muster-roll.

"There was me and the cook and the captain bold,
And the mate of the *Nancy* brig,
And the bo'sun tight, and a midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain's gig.

"For a month we'd neither wittles nor drink.
Till a-hungry we did feel,
So we drewed a lot, and accordin' shot
The captain for our meal.

"The next lot fell to the *Nancy's* mate,
And a delicate dish he made;
Then our appetite with the midshipmite
We seven survivors stayed.

W. S. GILBERT

"And then we murdered the bo'sun tight,
And he much resembled pig;
Then we wittled free, did the cook and me,
On the crew of the captain's gig.

"Then only the cook and me was left,
And the delicate question, 'Which
Of us two goes to the kettle?' arose
And we argued it out as sich.

"For I loved that cook as a brother, I did,
And the cook he worshipped me;
But we'd both be blowed if we'd either be stowed
In the other chap's hold, you see.

" 'I'll be eat if you dines off me,' says TOM,
'Yes, that,' says I, 'you'll be,'—
'I'm boiled if I die, my friend,' quoth I,
And 'Exactly so,' quoth he.

"Says he, 'Dear JAMES, to murder me
Were a foolish thing to do,
For don't you see that you can't cook *me*,
While I can—and will—cook *you*!'

"So he boils the water, and takes the salt
And the pepper in portions true
(Which he never forgot), and some chopped shalot,
And some sage and parsley too.

" 'Come here,' says he, with a proper pride,
Which his smiling features tell,
'Twill soothing be if I let you see,
How extremely nice you'll smell.'

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

"And he stirred it round and round and round,
And he sniffed at the foaming froth;
When I ups with his heels, and smothers his squeals
In the scum of the boiling broth.

"And I eat that cook in a week or less,
And—as I eating be
The last of his chops, why, I almost drops,
For a wessel in sight I see!

* * * * *

"And I never grin, and I never smile,
And I never larf nor play,
But I sit and croak, and a single joke
I have—which is to say:

"Oh, I am a cook and a captain bold,
And the mate of the *Nancy* brig,
And a bo'sun tight, *and* a midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain's gig!"

MIKADO'S SONG FROM "THE MIKADO"

A MORE humane Mikado never
Did in Japan exist,
To nobody second,
I'm certainly reckoned
A true philanthropist.
It is my very humane endeavour
To make, to some extent,
Each evil liver
A running river
Of harmless merriment.

W. S. GILBERT

My object all sublime
I shall achieve in time—
To let the punishment fit the crime—
The punishment fit the crime;
And make each prisoner pent
Unwillingly represent
A source of innocent merriment!
Of innocent merriment!

All prosy dull society sinners,
Who chatter and bleat and bore,
Are sent to hear sermons
From mystical Germans
Who preach from ten till four.
The amateur tenor, whose vocal villainies
All desire to shirk,
Shall, during off-hours,
Exhibit his powers
To Madame Tussaud's waxwork.

The lady who dies a chemical yellow
Or stains her grey hair puce,
Or pinches her figger,
Is blacked like a nigger
With permanent walnut juice.
The idiot who, in railway carriages,
Scribbles on window-panes,
We only suffer
To ride on a buffer
In Parliamentary trains.
My object all sublime, etc.

CHORUS

His object all sublime, etc.

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

The advertising quack who wearies
With tales of countless cures,
His teeth, I've enacted
Shall all be extracted
By terrified amateurs.
The music-hall singer attends a series
Of masses and fugues and "ops"
By Bach, interwoven
With Spohr and Beethoven,
At classical Monday Pops.

The billiard sharp who any one catches,
His doom's extremely hard—
He's made to dwell—
In a dungeon cell
On a spot that's always barred.
And there he plays extravagant matches
In fitless finger-stalls
On a cloth untrue,
With a twisted cue
And elliptical billiard balls!
My object all sublime, etc.

CHORUS

His object all sublime, etc.

"TITWILLOW"

From "Mikado"

ON a tree by a river a little tom-tit
Sang "Willow, titwillow, titwillow!"
And I said to him, "Dicky-bird, why do you sit
Singing 'Willow, titwillow, titwillow?'"
"Is it weakness of intellect, birdie?" I cried,

W. S. GILBERT

"Or a rather tough worm in your little inside?"
With a shake of his poor little head, he replied,
"Oh, willow, titwillow, titwillow!"

He slapped at his chest, as he sat on that bough,
Singing "Willow, titwillow, titwillow!"
And a cold perspiration bespangled his brow,
Oh, willow, titwillow, titwillow!
He sobbed and he sighed, and a gurgle he gave,
Then he plunged himself into the billowy wave,
And an echo arose from the suicide's grave—
"Oh, willow, titwillow, titwillow!"

Now I feel just as sure as I'm sure that my name
Isn't Willow, titwillow, titwillow,
That 'twas blighted affection that made him exclaim
"Oh, willow, titwillow, titwillow!"
And if you remain callous and obdurate, I
Shall perish as he did, and you will know why,
Though I probably shall not exclaim as I die,
"Oh, willow, titwillow, titwillow!"

"LITTLE BUTTERCUP"

From "Pinafore"

FOR I'm called Little Buttercup—dear Little Butter-
cup,
Though I could never tell why,
But still I'm called Buttercup—poor Little Butter-
cup,
Sweet Little Buttercup I!

I've snuff and tobacco, and excellent jacky,
I've scissors, and watches, and knives;

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

I've ribbons and laces to set off the faces
Of pretty young sweethearts and wives.

I've treacle and toffee, I've tea and I've coffee,
Soft tommy and succulent chops;
I've chickens and conies, and pretty polonies,
An excellent peppermint drops.

Then buy of your Buttercup—dear Little Buttercup;
Sailors should never be shy;
So, buy of your Buttercup—poor Little Buttercup;
Come, of your Buttercup buy!

LORD HIGH ADMIRAL'S SONG

From "Pinafore"

WHEN I was a lad I served a term
As office boy to an Attorney's firm.
I cleaned the windows and I swept the floor,
And I polished up the handle of the big front door.
I polished up that handle so carefuller
That now I am the Ruler of the Queen's Navee!
CHORUS.—He polished, etc.

As office boy I made such a mark
That they gave me the post of a junior clerk.
I served the writs with a smile so bland,
And I copied all the letters in a big round hand—
I copied all the letters in a hand so free,
That now I am the Ruler of the Queen's Navee!
CHORUS.—He copied, etc.

W. S. GILBERT

In serving writs I made such a name
That an articled clerk I soon became;
I wore clean collars and a brand-new suit
For the pass examination at the Institute.
And that pass examination did so well for me,
That now I am the Ruler of the Queen's Navee!
CHORUS.—And that pass examination, etc.

Of legal knowledge I acquired such a grip
That they took me into the partnership.
And that junior partnership, I ween,
Was the only ship that I ever had seen.
But that kind of ship so suited me,
That now I am the Ruler of the Queen's Navee!
CHORUS.—But that kind, etc.

I grew so rich that I was sent
By a pocket borough into Parliament.
I always voted at my party's call,
And I never thought of thinking for myself at all.
I thought so little, they rewarded me
By making me the Ruler of the Queen's Navee!
CHORUS.—He thought so little, etc.

Now landsmen all, whoever you may be,
If you want to rise to the top of the tree,
If your soul isn't fettered to an office stool,
Be careful to be guided by this golden rule—
Stick close to your desks and never go to sea,
And you all may be Rulers of the Queen's
Navee!
CHORUS.—Stick close, etc.

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

LORD CHANCELLOR'S SONG

From "Iolanthe"

THE Law is the true embodiment
Of everything that's excellent.
It has no kind of fault or flaw,
And I, my Lords, embody the Law.
The constitutional guardian I
Of pretty young Wards in Chancery,
All very agreeable girls—and none
Are over the age of twenty-one.

A pleasant occupation for
A rather susceptible Chancellor!

ALL. A pleasant, etc.

But though the compliment implied
Inflates me with legitimate pride,
It nevertheless can't be denied
That it has its inconvenient side.
For I'm not so old, and not so plain,
And I'm quite prepared to marry again,
But there'd be the deuce to pay in the Lords
If I fell in love with one of my Wards!

Which rather tries my temper, for
I'm *such* a susceptible Chancellor!

ALL. Which rather, etc.

And every one who'd marry a Ward
Must come to me for my accord,
And in my court I sit all day,
Giving agreeable girls away,

RICHARD WATSON GILDER

With one for him—and one for he—
And one for you—and one for ye—
And one for thou—and one for thee—
But never, oh, never a one for me!

Which is exasperating for
A highly susceptible Chancellor!

ALL. Which is, etc.

RICHARD WATSON GILDER

1844—1909

THE SONG OF A HEATHEN

IF Jesus Christ is a man—
And only a man—I say
That of all mankind I cleave to him,
And to him will I cleave always.

If Jesus Christ is a God—
And the only God—I swear
I will follow Him through heaven and hell,
The earth, the sea, and the air!

STRICKLAND GILLILAN

1869—

FINNIGIN TO FLANNIGAN

SUPERINTENDENT wuz Flannigan;
Boss av the siction wuz Finnigin;
Whiniver the kyars got offen the thrack,
An' muddled up things t' th' divil an' back,
Finnigin writ it to Flannigan,
Afther the wrick wuz all on ag'in;
That is, this Finnigin
Repoorted to Flannigan.

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

Whin Finnigin furst writ to Flannigan,
He writed tin pages—did Finnigin,
An' he tould jist how the smash occurred;
Full minny a tajus, blunderin' wurrd
Did Finnigin write to Flannigan
Afther the cars had gone on ag'in.
That wuz how Finnigin
Repoorted to Flannigan.

Now Flannigan knowed more than Finnigin—
He'd more idjucation, had Flannigan;
An' it wore'm clane an' complatly out
To tell what Finnigin writ about
In his writin' to Muster Flannigan.
So he writed back to Finnigin:
"Don't do sich a sin ag'in;
Make 'em brief, Finnigin!"

Whin Finnigin got this from Flannigan,
He blushed rosy rid, did Finnigin;
An' he said: "I'll gamble a whole month's pa-ay
That it will be minny an' minny a da-ay
Befoore Sup'rintindint—that's Flannigan—
Gits a whack at this very same sin ag'in.
From Finnigin to Flannigan
Repoorts won't be long ag'in."

.

Wan da-ay, on the siction av Finnigin,
On the road sup'rintinded by Flannigan,
A rail give way on a bit av a curve,
An' some kyars went off as they made the swerve.

CHARLOTTE PERKINS GILMAN

"There's nobody hurted," sez Finnigin,
"But repoorts must be made to Flannigan."
An' he winked at McGorrigan,
As married a Finnigin.

He wuz shantyin' thin, wuz Finnigin,
As minny a railroader's been ag'in,
An' the shmoky ol' lamp wuz burnin' bright
In Finnigin's shanty all that night—
Bilin' down his repoort, was Finnigin!
An' he writed this here: "Muster Flannigan:
Off ag'in, on ag'in,
Gone ag'in—Finnigin."

CHARLOTTE PERKINS GILMAN

1860—

SIMILAR CASES

THERE was once a little animal,
No bigger than a fox,
And on five toes he scampered
Over Tertiary rocks.
They called him Eohippus,
And they called him very small,
And they thought him of no value—
When they thought of him at all;
For the lumpish old Dinoceras
And Coryphodon so slow
Were the heavy aristocracy
In days of long ago.

Said the little Eohippus,
"I am going to be a horse!

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

And on my middle finger-nails
To run my earthly course!
I'm going to have a flowing tail!
I'm going to have a mane!
I'm going to stand fourteen hands high
On the psychozoic plain!"

The Coryphodon was horrified,
The Dinoceras was shocked;
And they chased young Eohippus,
But he skipped away and mocked.
Then they laughed enormous laughter,
And they groaned enormous groans,
And they bade young Eohippus
Go view his father's bones.
Said they, "You always were as small
And mean, as now we see,
And that's conclusive evidence
That you're always going to be.
What! Be a great, tall, handsome beast,
With hoofs to gallop on?
Why! You'd have to change your nature!"
Said the Loxolophodon.
They considered him disposed of,
And retired with gait serene;
That was the way they argued
In "the early Eocene."

There was once an Anthropoidal Ape,
Far smarter than the rest,
And everything that they could do
He always did the best;

CHARLOTTE PERKINS GILMAN

So they naturally disliked him,
And they gave him shoulders cool,
And when they had to mention him
They said he was a fool.

Cried this pretentious Ape one day,
"I'm going to be a Man!
And stand upright, and hunt, and fight,
And conquer all I can!
I'm going to cut down forest trees,
To make my houses higher!
I'm going to kill the Mastodon!
I'm going to make a fire!"

Loud screamed the Anthropoidal Apes
With laughter wild and gay;
They tried to catch that boastful one,
But he always got away.
So they yelled at him in chorus,
Which he minded not a whit;
And they pelted him with cocoanuts,
Which didn't seem to hit.
And then they gave him reasons
Which they thought of much avail,
To prove how his preposterous
Attempt was sure to fail.
Said the sages, "In the first place,
The thing cannot be done!
And, second, if it *could* be,
It would not be any fun!
And, third, and most conclusive,
And admitting no reply,

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

You would have to change your nature!

We should like to see you try!"

They chuckled then triumphantly,

These lean and hairy shapes,

For these things passed as arguments

With the Anthropoidal Apes.

There was once a Neolithic Man,

An enterprising wight,

Who made his chopping implements

Unusually bright.

Unusually clever he,

Unusually brave,

And he drew delightful Mammoths

On the borders of his cave.

To his Neolithic neighbors,

Who were startled and surprised,

Said he, "My friends, in course of time,

We shall be civilized!

We are going to live in cities!

We are going to fight in wars!

We are going to eat three times a day

Without the natural cause!

We are going to turn life upside down

About a thing called gold!

We are going to want the earth, and take

As much as we can hold!

We are going to wear great piles of stuff

Outside our proper skins!

We are going to have Diseases!

And Accomplishments!! And Sins!!!"

Then they all rose up in fury

Against their boastful friend,

GOETHE

For prehistoric patience
Cometh quickly to an end.
Said one, "This is chimerical!
Utopian! Absurd!"
Said another, "What a stupid life!
Too dull, upon my word!"
Cried all, "Before such things can come,
You idiotic child,
You must alter Human Nature!"
And they all sat back and smiled.
Thought they, "An answer to that last
It will be hard to find!"
It was a clinching argument
To the Neolithic Mind!

GOETHE

1749—1832

GERMANY

From "Faust"

CHORUS OF ANGELS

CHRIST is arisen!
Joy to the Mortal One,
Whom the unmerited,
Clinging, inherited
Needs did imprison.

CHORUS OF WOMEN

WITH spices and precious
Balm, we arrayed him:
Faithful and gracious,
We tenderly laid him:

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

Linen to bind him
Cleanlily wound we:
Ah! when we would find him,
Christ no more found we!

CHORUS OF ANGELS

CHRIST is ascended!
Bliss hath invested him,—
Woes that molested him,
Trials that tested him,
Gloriously ended!

Christ is arisen,
Out of Corruption's womb:
Burst ye the prison,
Break from your gloom!
Praising and pleading him,
Lovingly needing him,
Brotherly feeding him,
Preaching and speeding him,
Blessing, succeeding Him,
Thus is the Master near,—
Thus is He here!

SCENE IN THE DUNGEON

FAUST (*Before the Door*)

A SHUDDER, long unfelt, comes o'er me;
Mankind's collected woe o'erwhelms me, here.
She dwells within the dark, damp walls before me,
And all her crime was a delusion dear!
What! I delay to free her?

GOETHE

I dread, once again to see her?

On! my shrinking only brings Death more near.

(He grasps the lock: the sound of singing is heard inside.)

“My mother, the harlot
Who put me to death:
My father, the varlet,
Who eaten me hath!
Little sister, so good,
Laid my bones in the wood,
In the damp moss and clay:
Then was I a beautiful bird o’ the wood:
Fly away! Fly away!”

FAUST (unlocking.)

She does not dream her lover listens near:

That he the rattling chain, the rustling straw, can
hear.

(He enters.)

MARGARET (hiding herself on the
pallet.)

Woe! woe! They come. O death of bitterness!

FAUST (whispering.)

Hush! hush! The hour is come that frees thee.

MARGARET (throwing herself before
him.)

Art thou a man, then pity my distress!

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

FAUST.

Thy cries will wake the guards, and they will seize thee!

(He takes hold of the fetters to unlock them.)

MARGARET (on her knees.)

Who, headsman! unto thee such power
Over me could give?

Thou'rt come for me at midnight-hour:

Have mercy on me, let me live!

Is't not soon enough when morning chime has rung?

(She rises.)

And I am yet so young, so young!

And now Death comes, and ruin!

I, too, was fair, and that was my undoing.

My love was near, but now he's far;

Torn lies the wreath, scattered the blossoms are.

Seize me not thus so violently!

Spare me! What have I done to thee?

Let me not vainly entreat thee!

I never chanced, in all my days, to meet thee!

FAUST.

Shall I outlive this misery?

MARGARET.

Now am I wholly in thy might.

But let me suckle, first, my baby!

I blissed it all this livelong night:

They took't away, to vex me, maybe,

And now they say I killed the child outright.

And never shall I be glad again.

GOETHE

They sing songs about me! 't is bad of the folk to
do it!

There's an old story has the same refrain:
Who bade them so construe it?

FAUST (falling upon his knees.)

Here lieth one who loves thee ever,
The thraldom of thy woe to sever.

MARGARET (flinging herself beside
him.)

O let us kneel, and call the Saints to hide us!
Under the steps beside us,
The threshold under,
Hell heaves in thunder!
The Evil one
With terrible wrath
Seeketh a path
His prey to discover!

FAUST (aloud.)

Margaret! Margaret!

MARGARET (attentively listening.)

That was the voice of my lover!
(She springs to her feet; the fetters fall off.)
Where is he? I heard him call me.
I am free! No one shall enthrall me.
To his neck will I fly,
On his bosom lie!
On the threshold he stood, and Margaret! calling,

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

Midst of Hell's howling and noises appalling,
Midst of the wrathful, infernal derision,
I knew the sweet sound of the voice of the vision.

FAUST.

'T is I!

MARGARET.

'T is thou! O, say it once again!

(Clasping him.)

'T is he! 't is he! Where now is all my pain?

The anguish of the dungeon, and the chain?

'T is thou! Thou comest to save me,

And I am saved!—

Again the street I see

Where first I looked on thee;

And the garden, brightly blooming,

Where I and Martha wait thy coming.

FAUST (struggling to leave.)

Come! Come with me!

MARGARET.

Delay, now!

So fain I stay, when thou delayest!

(Caressing him.)

FAUST.

Away, now!

If longer here thou stayest,

We shall be made to dearly rue it.

GOETHE

MARGARET.

Kiss me!—canst no longer do it?
My friend, so short a time thou'rt missing,
And hast unlearned thy kissing?
Why is my heart so anxious, on thy breast?
Where once a heaven thy glance did create me,
A heaven thy loving words expressed,
And thou didst kiss, as thou wouldst suffocate me—
Kiss me!
Or I'll kiss thee!

(She embraces him.)

Ah, woe! thy lips are chill,
And still.
How changed in fashion
Thy passion!
Who has done me this ill?
(She turns away from him.)

FAUST.

Come, follow me! My darling, be more bold:
I'll clasp thee, soon, with warmth a thousand-fold:
But follow now! 'T is all I beg of thee.

MARGARET (turning to him.)

And is it thou? Thou, surely, certainly?

FAUST.

'T is I! Come on!

MARGARET.

Thou wilt unloose my chain,
And in thy lap wilt take me once again.

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

How comes it that thou dost not shrink from me?—
Say, dost thou know, my friend, whom thou mak'st
free?

FAUST.

Come! come! The night already vanisheth.

MARGARET.

My mother have I put to death
I've drowned the baby born to thee.
Was it not given to thee and me?
Thee, too!—'T is thou! It scarcely true doth seem—
Give me thy hand!—But, ah, 't is wet!
Why, wipe it off! Methinks that yet
There's blood thereon.
Ah, God! what hast thou done?
Nay, sheathe thy sword at last!
Do not affray me!

FAUST.

O, let the past be past!
Thy words will slay me!

MARGARET.

No, no! Thou must outlive us.
Now I'll tell thee the graves to give us
Thou must begin to-morrow
The work of sorrow!
The best place give to my mother,
Then close at her side my brother
And me a little away,
But not too very far, I pray!
And here, on my right breast, my baby lay!

GOETHE

Nobody else will lie beside me!—
Ah, within thine arms to hide me,
That was a sweet and gracious bliss,
But no more, no more can I attain it!
I would force myself on thee and constrain it,
And it seems thou repellst my kiss
And yet 't is thou, so good, so kind to see!

FAUST.

If thou feel'st it is I, then come with me!

MARGARET.

Out yonder?

FAUST.

To freedom.

MARGARET.

If the grave is there,
Death lying in wait, then come!
From here to eternal rest:
No further step—no, no!
Thou goest away! O Henry, if I could go!

FAUST.

Thou canst! Just will it! Open stands the door.

MARGARET.

I dare not go: there's no hope any more.
Why should I fly? They'll still my steps waylay
It is so wretched, forced to beg my living,
And a bad conscience sharper misery giving!
It is so wretched, to be strange, forsaken,
And I'd still be followed and taken!

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

FAUST.

I'll stay with thee.

MARGARET.

Be quick! Be quick!
Save thy perishing child!
Away! Follow the ridge
Up by the brook,
Over the bridge,
Into the wood,
To the left, where the plank is placed
In the pool!
Seize it in haste!
'T is trying to rise,
'T is struggling still!
Save it! Save it!

FAUST.

Recall thy wandering will!
One step, and thou art free at last!

MARGARET.

If the mountain we had only passed!
There sits my mother upon a stone,—
I feel an icy shiver!
There sits my mother upon a stone,
And her head is wagging ever.
She beckons, she nods not, her heavy head falls o'er:
She slept so long that she wakes no more.
She slept, while we were caressing:
Ah, those were the days of blessing!

GOETHE

FAUST.

Here words and prayers are nothing worth:
I'll venture, then, to bear thee forth.

MARGARET.

No—let me go! I'll suffer no force!
Grasp me not so murderously!
I've done, else, all things for the love of thee.

FAUST.

The day dawns: Dearest! Dearest!

MARGARET.

Day? Yes, the day comes,—the last day breaks for
me!

My wedding-day it was to be!

Tell no one thou hast been with Margaret!

Woe for my garland! The chances

Are over—'t is all in vain!

We shall meet once again,

But not at the dances!

The crowd is thronging, no word is spoken:

The square below

And the streets overflow:

The death-bell tolls, the wand is broken.

I am seized, and bound, and delivered—

Shoved to the block—they give the sign!

Now over each neck has quivered

The blade that is quivering over mine.

Dumb lies the world like the grave!

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

FAUST.

O had I ne'er been born!

MEPHISTOPHELES (appears outside.)

Off! or you're lost ere morn.
Useless talking, delaying and praying!
My horses are neighing:
The morning twilight is near.

MARGARET.

What rises up from the threshold here?
He! he! suffer him not!
What does he want in this holy spot?
He seeks me!

FAUST.

Thou shalt live.

MARGARET.

Judgment of God! myself to thee I give.

MEPHISTOPHELES (to Faust.)

Come! or I'll leave her in the lurch, and thee!

MARGARET.

Thine am I, Father! rescue me!
Ye angels, holy cohorts, guard me,
Camp around, and from evil ward me!
Henry! I shudder to think of thee.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

She is judged!

GOETHE

VOICE (from above.)

She is saved!

MEPHISTOPHELES (to Faust.)

Hither to me!

(He disappears with FAUST.)

VOICE (from within, dying away.)

HENRY! HENRY!

Translated by Bayard Taylor

(End.)

THE ERL-KING

(From the German of Goethe.)

O, WHO rides by night thro' the woodland so wild?
It is the fond father embracing his child;
And close the boy nestles within his loved arm,
To hold himself fast, and to keep himself warm.

'O father, see yonder! see yonder!' he says;
'My boy, upon what dost thou fearfully gaze?'
'O, 'tis the Erl-King with his crown and his shroud.'
'No, my son, it is but a dark wreath of the cloud.'

(The Erl-King speaks.)

'O come and go with me, thou loveliest child;
By many a gay sport shall thy time be beguiled;
My mother keeps for thee full many a fair toy,
And many a fine flower shall she pluck for my boy.'

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

'O father, my father, and did you not hear
The Erl-King whisper so low in my ear?'
'Be still, my heart's darling—my child, be at ease;
It was but the wild blast as it sung thro' the trees.'

Erl-King.

'O wilt thou go with me, thou loveliest boy?
My daughter shall tend thee with care and with joy;
She shall bear thee so lightly thro' wet and thro' wild,
And press thee, and kiss thee, and sing to my child.'

'O father, my father, and saw you not plain
The Erl-King's pale daughter glide past thro' the
rain?'

'O yes, my loved treasure, I knew it full soon;
It was the grey willow that danced to the moon.'

'O come and go with me, no longer delay,
Or else, silly child, I will drag thee away.'

'O father! O father! now, now, keep your hold,
The Erl-King has seized me—his grasp is so cold!'

Sore trembled the father; he spurr'd thro' the wild,
Clasping close to his bosom his shuddering child;
He reaches his dwelling in doubt and in dread,
But, clasp'd to his bosom, the infant was dead.

Translated by Sir Walter Scott.

FIRST LOVE

OH, who will bring me back the days,
So beautiful, so bright!
Those days when love first bore my heart
Aloft on pinions light?

GOETHE

Oh, who will bring me but an hour
Of that delightful time,
And wake in me again the power
That fired my golden prime?

I nurse my wound in solitude,
I sigh the livelong day,
And mourn the joys, in wayward mood,
That now are pass'd away.
Oh, who will bring me back the days
Of that delightful time,
And wake in me again the blaze
That fired my golden prime?

THE WILD ROSE

A BOY espied, in morning light,
A little rosebud blowing:
'Twas so delicate and bright,
That he came to feast his sight,
And wonder at its growing.
Rosebud, rosebud, rosebud red,
Rosebud brightly blowing!

I will gather thee—he cried—
Rosebud brightly blowing!
Then I'll sting thee, it replied,
And you'll quickly start aside
With the prickle glowing.
Rosebud, rosebud, rosebud red,
Rosebud brightly blowing!

But he pluck'd it from the plain,
The rosebud brightly blowing!

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

It turn'd and stung him, but in vain—
He regarded not the pain,
Homewards with it going.
Rosebud, rosebud, rosebud red,
Rosebud, brightly blowing!

THE VIOLET

A VIOLET blossom'd on the lea,
Half hidden from the eye,
As fair a flower as you might see,
When there came tripping by
A shepherd maiden fair and young,
Lightly, lightly o'er the lea:
Care she knew not, and she sung
Merrily!

"O were I but the fairest flower,
That blossoms on the lea;
If only for one little hour,
That she might gather me—
Clasp me in her bonny breast!"
Thought the little flower.
"O that in it I might rest
But an hour!"

Lack-a-day! Up came the lass,
Heeded not the violet:
Trode it down into the grass:
Though it died, 'twas happy yet.
"Trodden down although I lie,
Yet my death is very sweet—
O the happiness to die
At her feet!"

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

1728—1774

ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF A MAD DOG

Good people all, of every sort,
Give ear unto my song;
And if you find it wondrous short,—
It cannot hold you long.

In Islington there was a man,
Of whom the world might say,
That still a godly race he ran,—
Whene'er he went to pray.

A kind and gentle heart he had,
To comfort friends and foes;
The naked every day he clad,—
When he put on his clothes.

And in that town a dog was found,
As many dogs there be,
Both mongrel, puppy, whelp, and hound,
And curs of low degree.

This dog and man at first were friends;
But when a pique began,
The dog, to gain some private ends,
Went mad, and bit the man.

Around from all the neighbouring streets
The wondering neighbours ran,
And swore the dog had lost his wits,
To bite so good a man.

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

The wound it seemed both sore and sad
To every Christian eye;
And while they swore the dog was mad,
They swore the man would die.

But soon a wonder came to light,
That showed the rogues they lied
The man recovered of the bite,
The dog it was that died.

STANZAS ON WOMAN

WHEN lovely Woman stoops to folly,
And finds too late that men betray,
What charm can soothe her melancholy,
What art can wash her guilt away?

The only art her guilt to cover,
To hide her shame from every eye,
To give repentance to her lover,
And wring his bosom—is, to die.

AN ELEGY ON THAT GLORY OF HER SEX, MRS. MARY BLAIZE

Good people all, with one accord,
Lament for Madam Blaize,
Who never wanted a good word—
From those who spoke her praise.

The needy seldom passed her door,
And always found her kind;
She freely lent to all the poor—
Who left a pledge behind.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

She strove the neighbourhood to please,
With manners wondrous winning;
And never followed wicked ways—
Unless when she was sinning.

At church, in silks and satins new,
With hoop of monstrous size;
She never slumbered in her pew—
But when she shut her eyes.

Her love was sought, I do aver,
By twenty beaux and more;
The king himself has followed her—
When she has walked before.

But now her wealth and finery fled,
Her hangers-on cut short all;
The doctors found, when she was dead—
Her last disorder mortal.
Let us lament, in sorrow sore,
For Kent-street well may say,
That had she lived a twelvemonth more—
She had not died to-day.

THE GIFT

TO IRIS, IN BOW STREET, COVENT GARDEN

SAY, cruel Iris, pretty rake,
Dear mercenary beauty,
What annual offering shall I make
Expressive of my duty?

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

My heart, a victim to thine eyes,
Should I at once deliver,
Say, would the angry fair one prize
The gift, who slights the giver?

A bill, a jewel, watch, or toy,
My rivals give—and let 'em;
If gems or gold impart a joy,
I'll give them—when I get 'em.

I'll give—but not the full-blown rose,
Or rosebud, more in fashion;
Such short lived offerings but disclose
A transitory passion.

I'll give thee something yet unpaid,
Not less sincere than civil;
I'll give thee—ah! too charming maid,
I'll give thee—to the devil.

THE DESERTED VILLAGE

SWEET Auburn! loveliest village of the plain,
Where health and plenty cheered the labouring swain,
Where smiling spring its earliest visit paid,
And parting summer's lingering blooms delayed:
Dear lovely bowers of innocence and ease,
Seats of my youth, when every sport could please,
How often have I loitered o'er thy green,
Where humble happiness endeared each scene!
How often have I paused on every charm,
The sheltered cot, the cultivated farm,
The never-failing brook, the busy mill,

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

The decent church that topt the neighbouring hill,
The hawthorn bush, with seats beneath the shade,
For talking age and whispering lovers made!
How often have I blest the coming day,
When toil remitting lent its turn to play,
And all the village train, from labour free,
Led up their sports beneath the spreading tree,
While many a pastime circled in the shade,
The young contending as the old surveyed;
And many a gambol frolicked o'er the ground,
And sleights of art and feats of strength went
round.

And still as each repeated pleasure tired,
Succeeding sports the mirthful band inspired;
The dancing pair that simply sought renown,
By holding out, to tire each other down;
The swain mistrustless of his smutted face,
While secret laughter tittered round the place;
The bashful virgin's sidelong looks of love,
The matron's glance that would those looks reprove.
These were thy charms, sweet village! sports like
these,

With sweet succession, taught even toil to please;
These round thy bowers their cheerful influence
shed,
These were thy charms—but all these charms are
fled.

Sweet smiling village, loveliest of the lawn,
Thy sports are fled, and all thy charms withdrawn;
Amidst thy bowers the tyrant's hand is seen,
And desolation saddens all thy green:
One only master grasps the whole domain,

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

And half a tillage stints thy smiling plain;
No more thy glassy brook reflects the day,
But, choked with sedges, works its weedy way;
Along thy glades, a solitary guest,
The hollow-sounding bittern guards its nest;
Amidst thy desert walks the lapwing flies,
And tires their echoes with unvaried cries.
Sunk are thy bowers in shapeless ruin all,
And the long grass o'ertops the mouldering wall,
And, trembling, shrinking from the spoiler's hand,
Far, far away, thy children leave the land.

Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay:
Princes and lords may flourish, or may fade;
A breath can make them, as a breath has made:
But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,
When once destroyed, can never be supplied.

A time there was, ere England's griefs began,
When every rood of ground maintained its man;
For him light labour spread her wholesome store,
Just gave what life required, but gave no more:
His best companions, innocence and health;
And his best riches, ignorance of wealth.

But times are altered; trade's unfeeling train
Usurp the land and dispossess the swain;
Along the lawn, where scattered hamlets rose,
Unwieldy wealth and cumbrous pomp repose;
And every want to opulence allied,
And every pang that folly pays to pride.
Those gentle hours that plenty bade to bloom,

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

Those calm desires that asked but little room,
Those healthful sports that graced the peaceful scene,
Lived in each look, and brightened all the green;
These, far departing, seek a kinder shore,
And rural mirth and manners are no more.

Sweet Auburn! parent of the blissful hour,
Thy glades forlorn confess the tyrant's power.
Here, as I take my solitary rounds,
Amidst thy tangling walks, and ruined grounds,
And, many a year elapsed, return to view
Where once the cottage stood, the hawthorn grew,
Remembrance wakes with all her busy train,
Swells at my breast, and turns the past to pain.

In all my wanderings round this world of care,
In all my griefs—and God has given my share—
I still had hopes my latest hours to crown,
Amidst these humble bowers to lay me down;
To husband out life's taper at the close,
And keep the flame from wasting by repose:
I still had hopes, for pride attends us still,
Amidst the swains to show my book-learned skill,
Around my fire an evening group to draw,
And tell of all I felt, and all I saw;
And, as a hare, whom hounds and horns pursue,
Pants to the place from whence at first he flew,
I still had hopes, my long vexations past,
Here to return—and die at home at last.

O blest retirement, friend to life's decline,
Retreats from care, that never must be mine,
How happy he who crowns in shades like these,

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

A youth of labour with an age of ease;
Who quits a world where strong temptations try,
And, since 'tis hard to combat, learns to fly!
For him no wretches, born to work and weep,
Explore the mine, or tempt the dangerous deep,
Nor surly porter stands in guilty state,
To spurn imploring famine from the gate;
But on he moves to meet his latter end,
Angels around befriending virtue's friend;
Bends to the grave with unperceived decay,
While resignation gently slopes the way;
And, all his prospects brightening to the last,
His heaven commences ere the world be past!

Sweet was the sound, when oft at evening's close
Up yonder hill the village murmur rose;
There, as I past with careless steps and slow,
The mingling notes came softened from below;
The swain responsive as the milkmaid sung,
The sober herd that lowed to meet their young;
The noisy geese that gabbled o'er the pool,
The playful children just let loose from school;
The watchdog's voice that bayed the whispering wind,
And the loud laugh that spoke the vacant mind;
These all in sweet confusion sought the shade,
And filled each pause the nightingale had made.
But now the sounds of population fail,
No cheerful murmurs fluctuate in the gale,
No busy steps the grass-grown footway tread,
For all the bloomy flush of life is fled.
All but yon widowed, solitary thing,
That feebly bends beside the plashy spring;
She, wretched matron, forced in age, for bread,

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

To strip the brook with mantling cresses spread
To pick her wintry faggot from the thorn,
To seek her nightly shed, and weep till morn;
She only left of all the harmless train,
The sad historian of the pensive plain.

Near yonder copse, where once the garden smiled,
And still where many a garden flower grows wild;
There, where a few torn shrubs the place disclose,
The village preacher's modest mansion rose.
A man he was to all the country dear,
And passing rich with forty pounds a year;
Remote from towns he ran his godly race,
Nor e'er had changed, nor wished to change his
place;

Unpractised he to fawn, or seek for power,
By doctrines fashioned to the varying hour;
Far other aims his heart had learned to prize,
More skilled to raise the wretched than to rise.
His house was known to all the vagrant train,
He chid their wanderings, but relieved their pain;
The long remembered beggar was his guest,
Whose beard descending swept his aged breast;
The ruined spendthrift, now no longer proud,
Claimed kindred there, and had his claims allowed;
The broken soldier, kindly bade to stay,
Sat by his fire, and talked the night away;
Wept o'er his wounds, or tales of sorrow done,
Shouldered his crutch, and showed how fields were
won.

Pleased with his guests, the good man learned to
glow,
And quite forgot their vices in their woe;

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

Careless their merits, or their faults to scan,
His pity gave ere charity began.

Thus to relieve the wretched was his pride,
And even his failings leaned to virtue's side;
But in his duty prompt at every call,
He watched and wept, he prayed and felt for all.
And, as a bird each fond endearment tries
To tempt its new-fledged offspring to the skies,
He tried each art, reproved each dull delay,
Allured to brighter worlds, and led the way.

Beside the bed where parting life was laid,
And sorrow, guilt, and pain, by turns dismayed,
The reverend champion stood. At his control
Despair and anguish fled the struggling soul;
Comfort came down the trembling wretch to raise,
And his last faltering accents whispered praise.

At church, with meek and unaffected grace,
His looks adorned the venerable place;
Truth from his lips prevailed with double sway,
And fools, who came to scoff, remained to pray.
The service past, around the pious man,
With steady zeal, each honest rustic ran;
Even children followed with endearing wile,
And plucked his gown, to share the good man's smile.

His ready smile a parent's warmth exprest,
Their welfare pleased him, and their cares distrest;
To them his heart, his love, his griefs were given,
But all his serious thoughts had rest in heaven.
As some tall cliff that lifts its awful form

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

Swells from the vale and midway leaves the storm,
Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on its head.

Beside you straggling fence that skirts the way
With blossomed furze unprofitably gay,
There, in his noisy mansion, skilled to rule,
The village master taught his little school;
A man severe he was, and stern to view,
I knew him well, and every truant knew;
Well had the boding tremblers learned to trace
The day's disasters in his morning face;
Full well they laughed with counterfeited glee
At all his jokes, for many a joke had he;
Full well the busy whisper circling round,
Conveyed the dismal tidings when he frowned;
Yet he was kind, or, if severe in aught,
The love he bore to learning was in fault;
The village all declared how much he knew:
'Twas certain he could write and cypher too;
Lands he could measure, terms and tides presage,
And even the story ran—that he could gauge;
In arguing too, the parson owned his skill,
For even though vanquished, he could argue still;
While words of learned length and thundering sound
Amazed the gazing rustics ranged around,
And still they gazed, and still the wonder grew,
That one small head could carry all he knew.

But past is all his fame. The very spot
Where many a time he triumphed, is forgot.
Near yonder thorn, that lifts its head on high,
Where once the sign-post caught the passing eye,

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

Low lies that house where nut-brown draughts inspired,
Where grey-beard mirth, and smiling toil retired,
Where village statesmen talked with looks profound,
And news much older than their ale went round.
Imagination fondly stoops to trace
The parlour splendours of that festive place;
The white-washed wall, the nicely sanded floor,
The varnished clock that clicked behind the door;
The chest contrived a double debt to pay,
A bed by night, a chest of drawers by day;
The pictures placed for ornament and use,
The twelve good rules, the royal game of goose;
The hearth, except when winter chilled the day,
With aspen boughs, and flowers and fennel gay;
While broken tea-cups, wisely kept for show,
Ranged o'er the chimney, glistened in a row.

Vain transitory splendour! could not all
Reprieve the tottering mansion from its fall?
Obscure it sinks, nor shall it more impart
An hour's importance to the poor man's heart;
Thither no more the peasant shall repair
To sweet oblivion of his daily care;
No more the farmer's news, the barber's tale,
No more the woodman's ballad shall prevail;
No more the smith his dusky brow shall clear,
Relax his ponderous strength, and lean to hear;
The host himself no longer shall be found
Careful to see the mantling bliss go round;
Nor the coy maid, half willing to be prest,
Shall kiss the cup to pass it to the rest.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

Yes! let the rich deride, the proud disdain,
These simple blessings of the lowly train,
To me more dear, congenial to my heart,
One native charm, than all the gloss of art;
Spontaneous joys, where nature has its play,
The soul adopts, and owns their firstborn sway:
Lightly they frolic o'er the vacant mind,
Unenvied, unmolested, unconfined.
But the long pomp, the midnight masquerade,
With all the freaks of wanton wealth arrayed,
In these, ere triflers half their wish obtain,
The toiling pleasure sickens into pain;
And, even while fashion's brightest arts decoy,
The heart distrusting asks, if this be joy?

Ye friends to truth, ye statesmen who survey
The rich man's joys increase, the poor's decay,
'Tis yours to judge, how wide the limits stand
Between a splendid and a happy land.
Proud swells the tide with loads of freighted ore,
And shouting Folly hails them from her shore;
Hoards even beyond the miser's wish abound,
And rich men flock from all the world around.
Yet count our gains. This wealth is but a name
That leaves our useful products still the same.
Not so the loss. The man of wealth and pride
Takes up a space that many poor supplied;
Space for his lake, his park's extended bounds,
Space for his horses, equipage, and hounds;
The robe that wraps his limbs in silken sloth
Has robbed the neighbouring fields of half their
growth,
His seat, where solitary sports are seen,

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

Indignant spurns the cottage from the green;
Around the world each needful product flies,
For all the luxuries the world supplies.
While thus the land, adorned for pleasure all,
In barren splendour feebly waits the fall.

As some fair female, unadorned and plain,
Secure to please while youth confirms her reign,
Slight every borrowed charm that dress supplies,
Nor shares with art the triumph of her eyes;
But when those charms are past, for charms are frail,
When time advances, and when lovers fail,
She then shines forth, solicitous to bless,
In all the glaring impotence of dress.
Thus fares the land, by luxury betrayed,
In nature's simplest charms at first arrayed,
But verging to decline, its splendours rise,
Its vistas strike, its palaces surprise;
While, scourged by famine from the smiling land,
The mournful peasant leads his humble band;
And while he sinks, without one arm to save,
The country blooms—a garden and a grave.

Where then, ah! where, shall poverty reside,
To 'scape the pressure of contiguous pride?
If to some common's fenceless limits strayed,
He drives his flock to pick the scanty blade,
Those fenceless fields the sons of wealth divide,
And even the bare-worn common is denied.

If to the city sped—What waits him there?
To see profusion that he must not share;
To see ten thousand baneful arts combined

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

To pamper luxury; and thin mankind;
To see those joys the sons of pleasure know
Extorted from his fellow creature's woe.
Here, while the courtier glitters in brocade,
There the pale artist plies the sickly trade:
Here, while the proud their long-drawn pomps display.

There the black gibbet blooms beside the way.
The dome where pleasure holds her midnight reign.

Here, richly decked, admits the gorgeous train;
Tumultuous grandeur crowds the blazing square,
The rattling chariots clash, the torches glare.
Sure scenes like these no troubles e'er annoy!
Sure these denote one universal joy!
Are these thy serious thoughts? Ah, turn thine eyes
Where the poor houseless shivering female lies.
She once, perhaps, in village plenty blest,
Has wept at tales of innocence distress;
Her modest looks the cottage might adorn,
Sweet as the primrose peeps beneath the thorn;
Now lost to all; her friends, her virtue fled,
Near her betrayer's door she lays her head,
And, pinched with cold, and shrinking from the shower,

With heavy heart deplores that luckless hour,
When Idly first, ambitious of the town,
She left her wheel and robes of country brown.

Do thine, sweet Auburn, thine, the loveliest train,
Do thy fair tribes participate her pain?
Even now, perhaps, by cold and hunger led,
At proud men's doors they ask a little bread!

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

Ah, no. To distant climes, a dreary scene,
Where half the convex world intrudes between,
Through torrid tracts with fainting steps they go,
Where wild Altama murmurs to their woe.
Far different there from all that charmed before,
The various terrors of that horrid shore;
Those blazing suns that dart a downward ray,
And fiercely shed intolerable day;
Those matted woods where birds forget to sing,
But silent bats in drowsy clusters cling;
Those poisonous fields with rank luxuriance crowned,
Where the dark scorpion gathers death around:
Where at each step the stranger fears to wake
The rattling terrors of the vengeful snake;
Where crouching tigers wait their hapless prey,
And savage men more murderous still than they;
While oft in whirls the mad tornado flies,
Mingling the ravaged landscape with the skies.
Far different these from every former scene,
The cooling brook, the grassy vested green,
The breezy covert of the warbling grove,
That only sheltered thefts of harmless love.

Good Heaven! what sorrows gloomed that parting
day,
That called them from their native walks away;
When the poor exiles, every pleasure past,
Hung round the bowers, and fondly looked their
last,
And took a long farewell, and wished in vain
For seats like these beyond the western main;
And shuddering still to face the distant deep,
Returned and wept, and still returned to weep.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

The good old sire, the first prepared to go
To new-found worlds, and wept for others' woe;
But for himself, in conscious virtue brave,
He only wished for worlds beyond the grave.
His lovely daughter, lovelier in her tears,
The fond companion of his helpless years,
Silent went next, neglectful of her charms,
And left a lover's for a father's arms.
With louder plaints the mother spoke her woes,
And blest the cot where every pleasure rose;
And kissed her thoughtless babes with many a tear,
And clasped them close, in sorrow doubly dear;
Whilst her fond husband strove to lend relief
In all the silent manliness of grief.

O, luxury! thou curst by Heaven's decree,
How ill exchanged are things like these for thee!
How do thy potions with insidious joy
Diffuse their pleasures only to destroy!
Kingdoms by thee, to sickly greatness grown,
Boast of a florid vigour not their own.
At every draught more large and large they grow,
A bloated mass of rank unwieldly woe;
Till sapped their strength, and every part unsound,
Down, down they sink, and spread a ruin round.

Even now the devastation is begun,
And half the business of destruction done;
Even now, methinks, as pondering here I stand,
I see the rural virtues leave the land.
Down where yon anchoring vessel spreads the sail
That idly waiting flaps with every gale,
Downward they move, a melancholy band,

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

Pass from the shore, and darken all the strand.
Contented toil, and hospitable care,
And kind connubial tenderness, are there;
And piety with wishes placed above,
And steady loyalty, and faithful love.
And thou, sweet Poetry, thou loveliest maid,
Still first to fly where sensual joys invade;
Unfit in these degenerate times of shame,
To catch the heart, or strike for honest fame;
Dear charming nymph, neglected and decried,
My shame in crowds, my solitary pride.
Thou source of all my bliss, and all my woe,
That found'st me poor at first, and keep'st me so;
Thou guide, by which the nobler arts excel,
Thou nurse of every virtue, fare thee well!
Farewell, and O! where'er thy voice be tried.
On Torno's cliffs, or Pambamarea's side,
Whether where equinoctial fervours glow,
Or winter wraps the polar world in snow,
Still let thy voice, prevailing over time,
Redress the rigours of the inclement clime;
Aid slighted truth, with thy persuasive strain;
Teach erring man to spurn the rage of gain:
Teach him, that states of native strength possess,
Though very poor, may still be very blest;
That trade's proud empire hastes to swift decay,
As ocean sweeps the laboured mole away;
While self-dependent power can time defy,
As rocks resist the billows and the sky.

EDMUND GOSSE

EDMUND GOSSE

1849—1928

IMPRESSION

IN these restrained and careful times
Our knowledge petrifies our rhymes;
Ah! for that reckless fire men had
When it was witty to be mad;

When wild conceits were piled in scores,
And lit by flaming metaphors,
When all was crazed and out of tune—
Yet throbbed with music of the moon.

If we could dare to write as ill
As some whose voices haunt us still,
Even we, perchance, might call our own
Their deep enchanting undertone.

We are too diffident and nice,
Too learned and too over-wise,
Too much afraid of faults to be
The flutes of bold sincerity.

For, as this sweet life passes by,
We blink and nod with critic eye;
We've no words rude enough to give
Its charm so frank and fugitive.

The green and scarlet of the Park,
The undulating streets at dark,
The brown smoke blown across the blue,
This colored city we walk through;

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

The pallid faces full of pain
The field-smell of the passing wain,
The laughter, longing, perfume, strife,
The daily spectacle of life;

Ah! how shall this be given to rhyme,
By rhymesters of a knowing time?
Ah! for the age when verse was glad,
Being godlike, to be bad and mad.

BALLADE OF DEAD CITIES

WHERE are the cities of the plain?
And where the shrines of rapt Bethel?
And Calah built of Tubal-Cain?
And Shinar whence King Amraphel
Came out in arms, and fought and fell,
Decoyed into the pits of slime
By Siddim, and sent sheer to hell;
Where are the cities of old time?

Where now is Karnak, that great fane
With granite built, a miracle?
And Luxor smooth without a stain,
Whose graven scriptures still we spell?
The jackal and the owl may tell,
Dark snakes around their ruins climb,
They fade like echo in a shell;
Where are the cities of old time?

And where is white Shusan, again,
Where Vashti's beauty bore the bell,
And all the Jewish oil and grain
Were brought to Mithridath to sell,

R. GRAHAM OF GARTMORE

'Where Nehemiah would not dwell,
Because another town sublime
Decoyed him with her oracle?
Where are the cities of old time?

ENVOY

Prince, with a dolorous, ceaseless knell,
Above their wasted toil and crime
The waters of oblivion swell:
Where are the cities of old time?

R. GRAHAM OF GARTMORE

1735—1797

IF DOUGHTY DEEDS

IF doughty deeds my lady please
Right soon I'll mount my steed;
And strong his arm, and fast his seat
That bears frae me the meed.

I'll wear thy colors in my cap
Thy picture at my heart;
And he that bends not to thine eye
Shall rue it to his smart!

Then tell me how to woo thee, Love;
O tell me how to woo thee!
For thy dear sake, nae care I'll take
Tho' ne'er another trow me.

If gay attire delight thine eye
I'll dight me in array;
I'll tend thy chamber door all night,
And squire thee all the day.

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

If sweetest sounds can win thine ear,
These sounds I'll strive to catch;
Thy voice I'll steal to woo thyself,
That voice that nane can match.

But if fond love thy heart can gain,
I never broke a vow;
Nae maiden lays her skaith to me,
I never loved but you.
For you alone I ride the ring,
For you I wear the blue;
For you alone I strive to sing,
O tell me how to woo!
Then tell me how to woo thee, Love;
O tell me how to woo thee!
For thy dear sake, nae care I'll take,
Tho' ne'er another trow me.

ALFRED PERCEVAL GRAVES

1846—

FATHER O'FYLNN

OF priests we can offer a charmin' variety,
Far renowned for larnin' and piety;
Still, I'd advance ye, widout impropriety,
Flower O'Flynn as the flower of them all.

CHORUS

*Here's a health to you, Father O'Flynn,
Slainté, and slainté, and slainté agin;
Powerfulest preacher, and
Tenderest teacher, and
Kindliest creature in ould Donegal.*

ALFRED PERCEVAL GRAVES

Don't talk of your Provost and Fellows of Trinity,
Famous for ever at Greek and Latinity,
Dad and the divels and all at Divinity,
 Father O'Flynn'd make hares of them all!
 Come, I venture to give you my word,
 Never the likes of his logic was heard,
 Down from Mythology
 Into Thayology,
Troth! and Conchology if he'd the call.

Chorus.

Och! Father O'Flynn, you've the wonderful way wid
 you,
All ould sinners are wishful to pray wid you,
All the young childer are wild for to play wid you,
You've such a way wid you, Father avick!
 Still for all you've so gentle a soul,
 Gad, you've your flock in the grandest control;
 Checking the crazy ones,
 Coaxin' onaisy ones,
Liftin' the lazy ones on wid the stick.

Chorus.

An though quite avoidin' all foolish frivolity,
Still at all seasons of innocent jollity,
Where was the play-boy could claim an equality
 At comicality, Father, wid you?
Once the Bishop looked grave at your jest,
Till this remark set him off wid the rest:
 "Is it lave gaiety
 All to the laity?
Cannot the clargy be Irishmen too?"

Chorus.

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

JOHN WOODCOCK GRAVES

JOHN PEEL

D'YE ken John Peel with his coat so gray?
D'ye ken John Peel at the break of the day?
D'ye ken John Peel when he's far, far away,
With his hounds and his horn in the morning?

'Twas the sound of his horn called me from my
bed,

And the cry of his hounds has me oft-times led,
For Peel's *View-hollo* would waken the dead,
Or a fox from his lair in the morning.

D'ye ken that bitch whose tongue is death?
D'ye ken her sons of peerless faith?
D'ye ken that a fox with his last breath
Cursed them all as he died in the morning?

Yes, I ken John Peel and Ruby too
Ranter and Royal and Bellman as true;
From the drag to the chase, from the chase to a view,
From a view to the death in the morning.

And I've followed John Peel both often and far
O'er the rasper-fence and the gate and the bar,
From Low Denton Holme up to Scratchmere Scar,
When we vied for the brush in the morning.

Then here's to John Peel with my heart and soul,
Come fill—fill to him another strong bowl:
And we'll follow John Peel through fair and through
foul,
While we're waked by his horn in the morning.

THOMAS GRAY

'Twas the sound of his horn called me from my
bed,
And the cry of his hounds has me oft-times led,
For Peel's *View-hollo* would waken the dead
Or a fox from his lair in the morning.

THOMAS GRAY

1716—1771

ELEGY WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD

THE curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea,
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds:

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower
The moping owl does to the moon complain
Of such as, wandering near her secret bower,
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade
Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,
The swallow twittering from the straw-built shed,

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn
Or busy housewife ply her evening care:
No children run to lisp their sire's return,
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke;
How jocund did they drive their team afield!
How bow'd the woods beneath their sturdy stroke!

Let not ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;
Nor grandeur hear with a disdainful smile
The short and simple annals of the poor.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave
Awaits alike th' inevitable hour:—
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Nor you, ye proud, impute to these the fault
If memory o'er their tomb no trophies raise,
Where through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault
The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

Can storied urn or animated bust
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?
Can honor's voice provoke the silent dust.
Or flattery soothe the dull cold ear of death?

THOMAS GRAY

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;
Hands, that the rod of empire might have sway'd,
Or waked to extasy the living lyre:

But knowledge to their eyes her ample page
Rich with the spoils of time, did ne'er unroll;
Chill penury repress'd their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of the soul.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark unfathom'd caves of ocean bear:
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village-Hampden, that with dauntless breast
The little tyrant of his fields withstood,
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,
Some Cromwell, guiltless of his country's blood.

Th' applause of listening senates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
And read their history in a nation's eyes

Their lot forbad: nor circumscribed alone
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confined;
Forbad to wade thro' slaughter to a throne,
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind;

The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,
To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,
Or heap the shrine of luxury and pride
With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife
Their sober wishes never learn'd to stray;

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

Along the coal sequester'd vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenour of their way
Yet e'en these bones from insult to protect
Some frail memorial still erected nigh,
With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture deck'd,
Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their name, their years, spelt by th' unletter'd Muse,
The place of fame and elegy supply:
And many a holy text around she strews,
That teach the rustic moralist to die.

For who, to dumb forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing anxious being e'er resign'd,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing lingering look behind?

On some fond breast the parting soul relies,
Some pious drops the closing eye requires;
E'en from the tomb the voice of nature cries,
E'en in our ashes live their wonted fires.

For thee, who, mindful of th' unhonor'd dead,
Dost in these lines their artless tale relate;
If chance, by lonely contemplation led,
Some kindred spirit shall enquire thy fate,—

Haply some hoary-headed swain may say,
"Oft we have seen him at the peep of dawn
Brushing with hasty steps the dews away,
To meet the sun upon the upland lawn;

"There at the foot of yonder nodding beech
That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,
His listless length at noon-tide would he stretch,
And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

THOMAS GRAY

"Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,
Muttering his wayward fancies he would rove;
Now drooping, woeful-wan, like one forlorn,
Or crazed with care, or cross'd in hopeless love.

"One morn I miss'd him on the custom'd hill,
Along the heath, and near his favorite tree;
Another came; nor yet beside the rill,
Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he;

'The next with dirges due in sad array
Slow through the church-way path we saw him
borne,—
Approach and read (for thou canst read) the lay
Graved on the stone beneath yon aged thorn.'

THE EPITAPH

Here rests his head upon the lap of earth
A youth, to fortune and to fame unknown;
Fair science frown'd not on his humble birth
And melancholy mark'd him for her own.

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere;
Heaven did a recompense as largely send:
He gave to misery (all he had) a tear,
He gain'd from Heaven ('twas all he wish'd) a
friend.

No farther seek his merits to disclose,
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode,
(There they alike in trembling hope repose,)
The bosom of his Father and his God.

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

HYMN TO ADVERSITY

DAUGHTER of Jove, relentless power,
Thou tamer of the human breast,
Whose iron scourge and torturing hour
The bad affright, afflict the best!
Bound in thy adamantine chain
The proud are taught to taste of pain,
And purple tyrants vainly groan
With pangs unfelt before, unpitied and alone.

When first thy Sire to send on earth
Virtue, his darling child, design'd,
To thee he gave the heavenly birth
And bade to form her infant mind.
Stern, rugged nurse! thy rigid lore
With patience many a year she bore;
What sorrow was, thou bad'st her know,
• And from her own she learn'd to melt at others' woe.

Scared at thy frown terrific, fly
Self-pleasing Folly's idle brood,
Wild Laughter, Noise, and thoughtless Joy,
And leave us leisure to be good.
Light they disperse, and with them go
The summer friend, the flattering foe;
By vain Prosperity received,
To her they vow their truth, and are again believed.

Wisdom in sable garb array'd
Immersed in rapturous thought profound,
And Melancholy, silent maid,
With leaden eye, that loves the ground,

THOMAS GRAY

Still on thy solemn steps attend:
Warm Charity, the general friend,
With Justice, to herself severe,
And Pity dropping soft the sadly-pleasing tear.

Oh! gently on thy suppliant's head
Dread goddess, lay thy chastening hand!
Not in thy Gorgon terrors clad.

Nor circled with the vengeful band
(As by the impious thou art seen)
With thundering voice, and threatening mien;
With screaming Horror's funeral cry,
Despair, and fell Disease, and ghastly Poverty;—

Thy form benign, oh goddess, wear
Thy milder influence impart,
Thy philosophic train be there
To soften, not to wound my heart.
The generous spark extinct revive,
Teach me to love and to forgive,
Exact my own defects to scan.
What others are to feel, and know myself a Man.

ON A FAVORITE CAT, DROWNED IN A TUB OF GOLD FISHES

'Twas on a lofty vase's side,
Where China's gayest art had dyed
The azure flowers that blow,
Demurest of the tabby kind
The pensive Selima reclined,
Gazed on the lake below.

Her conscious tail her joy declared:
The fair round face, the snowy beard,

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

The velvet of her paws,
Her coat that with the tortoise vies,
Her ears of jet, and emerald eyes—
She saw, and purr'd applause.

Still had she gazed, but 'midst the tide
Two angel forms were seen to glide,
The Genii of the stream:
Their scaly armor's Tyrian hue,
Through richest purple, to the view
Betray'd a golden gleam.

The hapless Nymph with wonder saw:
A whisker first, and then a claw
With many an ardent wish.
She stretch'd, in vain, to reach the prize—
What female heart can gold despise?
What Cat's averse to fish?

Presumptuous maid! with looks intent
Again she stretch'd, again she bent,
Nor knew the gulf between—
Malignant Fate sat by and smiled—
The slippery verge her feet beguiled;
She tumbled headlong in!

Eight times emerging from the flood
She mew'd to every watery God
Some speedy aid to send.
No Dolphin came, no Nereid stirr'd:
Nor cruel Tom nor Susan heard.
A favourite has no friend!

From hence, ye Beauties, undeceived,
Know one false step is ne'er retrieved,

GERALD GRIFFIN

And be with caution bold.
Not all that tempts your wandering eyes
And heedless hearts, is lawful prize;
Nor all that glisters, gold.

GERALD GRIFFIN

1803—1840

EILEEN AROON

WHEN like the early rose,
Eileen Aroon!
Beauty in childhood blows,
Eileen Aroon!
When, like a diadem,
Buds blush around the stem,
Which is the fairest gem?—
Eileen Aroon!

Is it the laughing eye,
Eileen Aroon!
Is it the timid sigh,
Eileen Aroon!
Is it the tender tone,
Soft as the string'd harp's moan?
O, it is truth alone,—
Eileen Aroon!

When like the rising day,
Eileen Aroon!
Love sends his early day,
Eileen Aroon!
What makes his dawning glow,
Changeless through joy or woe?
Only the constant know:—
Eileen Aroon!

THE WORLD'S 1000 BEST POEMS

I know a valley fair,
Eileen Aroon!

I knew a cottage there,
Eileen Aroon!

Far in that valley's shade
I knew a gentle maid,
Flower of a hazel glade,—
Eileen Aroon!

Who in the song so sweet?
Eileen Aroon!

Who in the dance so fleet?
Eileen Aroon!

Dear were her charms to me,
Dearer her laughter free,
Dearest her constancy,—
Eileen Aroon!

Were she no longer true,
Eileen Aroon!

What should her lover do?
Eileen Aroon!

Fly with his broken chain
Far o'er the sounding main,
Never to love again,—
Eileen Aroon!

Youth must with time decay,
Eileen Aroon!

Beauty must fade away,
Eileen Aroon!

Castles are sack'd in war,
Chieftains are scatter'd far
Truth is a fixèd star,—
Eileen Aroon!

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